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at the 9th AOU Expo (Chiba)

TRIPLE FEATURE

ACME '94

(Rosemont U.S.A)

Hotelex '94 Shanghai

(Shanghai, P.R.C)

'94 T.A.E.

(Taipei, R.O.C)

SPECIAL REPORT

Virtual Reality Update pt. 2



5
MAY

1994

Vol. 3 No. 9

KARAOKE ROUND UP BACK STAGE

Mr. Larry Richenstein,
President, Lonestar Technologies, Ltd.

WORLD UPDATE

Beijing, R.O.C.: A New Dynasty?

**NEW CABINET,
NEW COURSES,
NEW**

Sensations!

FINAL LAP

Challenge your driving skills with 4 unique courses in a newly designed cabinet.

Actual Racing Courses

Four of the most popular courses are actually used in a Formula-1 circuit. You can compete on the same course where many great contests have taken place.

"The Four"

The machines are modeled after the four most distinguished teams.



SD

Dimensions : W1230 × D1660 × H1900(mm)
Weight : 252kg

The Power of "System FL"

The newly developed PCB system "System FL" generates 3-D modeling graphics of machines and exceptional racing sound effects!! The engines have their own unique sounds that racing fans can instantly identify as their favorite Formula 1 machine races down the course. You can hear the exciting shouts of the spectators as you blast past the grandstands. You will be impressed by Ferrari's brilliant red and Benetton's racing green!

DX

Dimensions : W1730 × D2760 × H1790(mm)
Weight : 540kg



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Q SOUND™

QSound Chips have been developed by QSound and incorporate QSound's proprietary QSound sound enhancement technology.

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With its advanced functions and impressive features, Capcom's new CPS II hardware system is a sure bet to boost your income.

Major features of CPS II:

- Anti-copy protection.
- A sub-board that can be plugged into the mother board for inexpensive software changes.
- Faster, sharper graphics and QSound 3D audio.

*For software changes, the compatibility of sub-boards with the mother board differs depending on the sales region. Please contact your dealer for details.

SUPER STREET FIGHTER II

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It's a tough world these days.
Sometimes words just aren't enough . . .

The boss.
Politicians.
Teachers....
Angry? Tired?
Stressed?
Let it all go!

NEW



Dimensions: 108cm L x 75cm W x 185cm H Weight: 130kg
Power consumption: 150W

UGO UGO LORPAR

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NEW

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400 prize
capsules.

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change machine
optional.

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by 5 to 10 times when
using the change
machine.

Specifications:
13cm L x 32cm W x 55cm
H (changer)
27cm L x 32cm W x 45cm
H (stand)



Dimensions: 87cm L x 96.5cm W x 88cm H Weight: 85kg
Payout percentages: from 2/10 to 8/10
Uses 75mm diameter capsules
Electrical specifications: AC100V 50/60Hz
Power consumption: 60W (max 86W)

CHAMPION KICK 2

Test your kicking skills as you go
for the game-winning goal!

AN
INVIGORATING
GAME!

KICK IT!



Dimensions: 110cm L x 140cm W x 172cm H
Power consumption: 50W Exterior mounted battery
▽61-15252 Weight: 192kg Patent pending.

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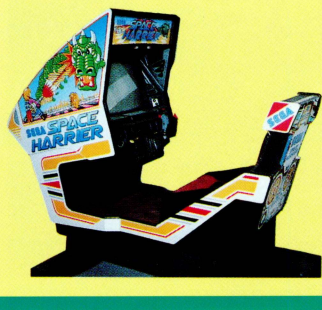
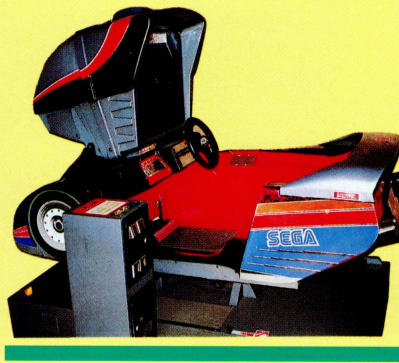
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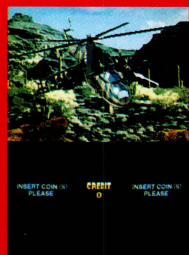
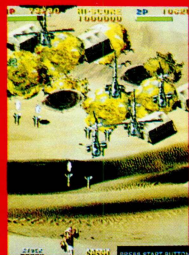
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- Captivating for players of all ages. Use your arsenal of trick shots to attack the enemy. Everything in the sky and on the ground can be destroyed, bringing the thrill of shooting excitement to the screen.
- Breathtakingly realistic battle scenes.
- Unlike other games, trick shots are always available, requiring no special power-up items.
- All buildings that appear on screen can be destroyed. Demolish them by continuously pressing the control buttons to win high points!

古今東西

千支物語

えとものがたり

- A falling-block puzzle game, this one allows two-player matches.
- Select from two game modes.
- Story mode: challenge the enemies (twelve different beasts) that await you along your journey.
- Battle mode: heated match play (only one coin needed for a two-player game!).



BANG² BUSTERS

SUPER HIGH TECH GAME
NEO-GEO

- An action-type stage-clearing game. Pump up and inflate your enemies, then grab and hurl them!
- Enemies come in all shapes and sizes.
- There are various ways you can do combat, including normal throw, dash throw, and spin throw. You can set up strategies.
- You can even attack enemies by continuously spinning them round and round-then dashing them!



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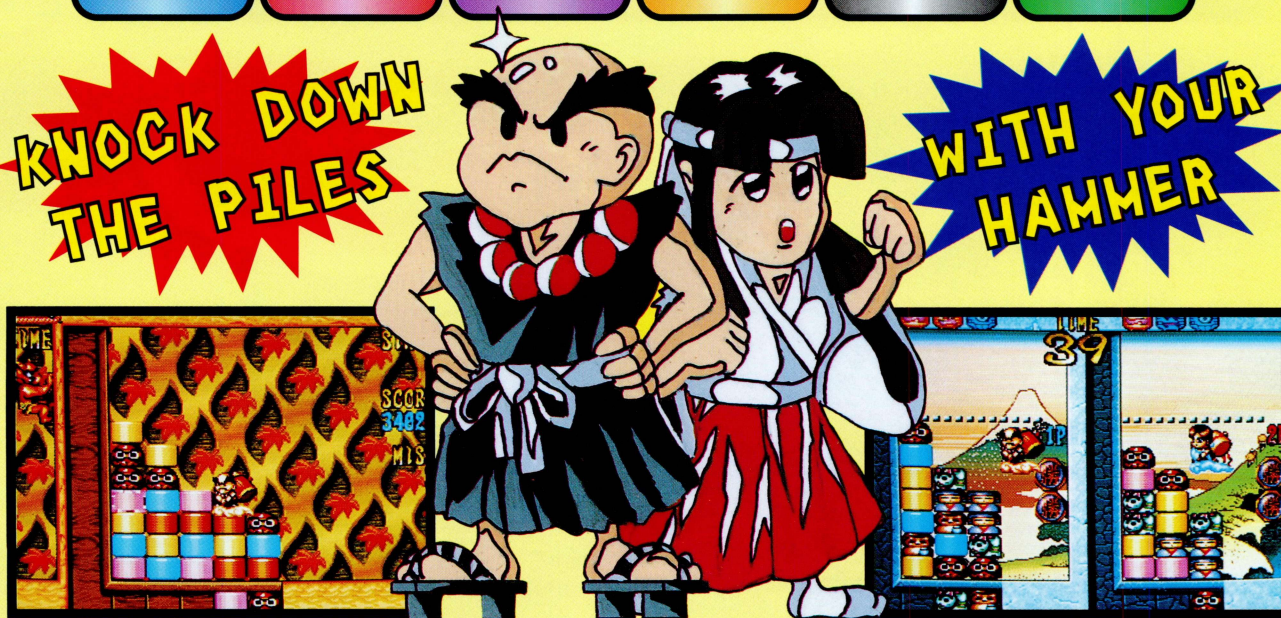
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DHARMA

**KNOCK DOWN
THE PILES**

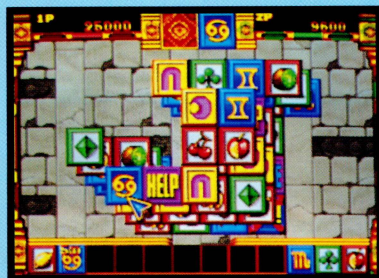
**WITH YOUR
HAMMER**



Toride II

The Revenge

A PUZZLE GAME



Choose your tile pattern

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SPECIFICATIONS

Outer dimensions : 113.2 cm., 44.57 in. (W)
: 282.8 cm., 111.34 in. (D)
: 186.3 cm., 73.34 in. (H)
Weight : Approximately 375 kg, 826.72 lbs.
Power consumption : AC 110-240V 725-740W
Monitor : 50 inch Projection TV
PAT. PEND.

SEGA BRINGS YOU "JURASSIC PARK," A SHOOTING-RIDE GAME BASED ON THE HIT MOVIE.



Jurassic Park TM & © 1992 Universal City Studios, Inc. & Amblin Entertainment, Inc.



SPECIFICATIONS

Outer dimensions : 122 cm., 48.03 in. (W)
181 cm., 71.26 in. (D)
185 cm., 72.83 in. (H)
Weight : 440 kg., 970.02 lbs.
Power consumption : 1,110W-1,126W
PAT. PEND.

A REVOLUTIONARY WORLD-FIRST FIGHTING!



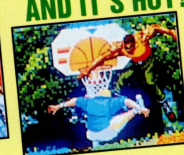
Virtua Fighter



SPECIFICATIONS

Outer : 114 cm., 44.88 in. (W)
dimensions : 225-320 cm., (D)
88.83-126.34 in.
: 186.7 cm., 73.50 in. (H)
Weight : 325 kg., 716.50 lbs.
Power consumption : AC 110V-240V
416W-438W
Monitor : 50 inch monitor
PAT. PEND.

UP TO 6-PLAYER SIMULTANEOUS GAME PLAY! IT'S 3 ON 3 STREET BASKETBALL- AND IT'S HOT!



HARD DUNK

SPECIFICATIONS

Outer dimensions : 171 cm., 67.32 in. (W)
97.5 cm., 38.39 in. (D)
204.2 cm., 80.39 in. (H)
Weight : 192 kg., 423.3 lbs.
Power consumption : AC 110V-240V 260W
PAT. PEND.



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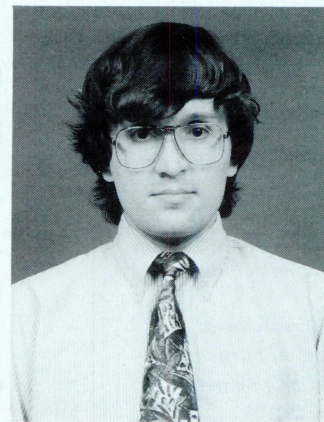
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FROM THE EDITORIAL ROOM

TO OUR READERS:



Carl Freire, Associate Editor

The heart of the winter-spring trade show season has come and gone, with expos having been held around Europe, Asia, and in the U.S.. Only FER in Spain remains at the time of writing, and will have passed by the time you read this. We've heard people talking about a variety of issues that are important to their markets, but the one common to all was the price of games. "It looks good, but it's too expensive," was the judgment on many pieces of equipment.

Why is this so? Essentially, there are two reasons. First, in the case of Japanese manufacturers, the strong yen is having a negative effect on their ability to offer their products at prices that operators can afford, or at least feel they can afford. Obviously, the manufacturers are not unaware of these constraints; after all, they do want to sell their products. As is happening in many other industries in Japan today, video game manufacturers are starting to look for ways to move at least part of their factory facilities overseas in order to bring down prices. Sega, for example, has plans to manufacture upright cabinet and two-seater versions of their new *Daytona USA* piece in the U.S., where production costs are lower. Other manufacturers are likewise investigating the possibilities of opening facilities around Asia, in the U.S., and in Europe.

The main factor, however, is that a number of the video game manufac-

turers are concentrating on high-end equipment, and this in turn means high costs. Sega's Tom Petit was quite clear on that company's intention to devote most of its energies on technologically advanced products. Namco has likewise been emphasizing such equipment, and other Japanese makers such as Konami and Taito have been conducting their own projects as well. American manufacturers have been no slouches in this regard either, with Williams concentrating on high-end graphics for their upright cabinet pieces and Atari (some say to its own detriment) leading the way with cockpit games.

However, one has to remember that the technology that drives a game like Atari's *T-Mek* or Namco's *Ridge Racer* is not cheap. It takes a lot of money to build the CPU and graphics board needed to drive a game with texture-mapped polygon-based graphics. Expect a high-price for these games, at least until it becomes less expensive to produce the technology needed for them. And the prices will surely come down, if the personal computer industry is any example.

On the other hand, also remember that these aren't the only manufacturers out there. There are a number of other Japanese companies making relatively inexpensive, board-based video games, and, for that matter, neither Namco nor Sega are putting all their eggs into one basket. In the U.S., the Strata Group has been com-

ing on strong over the past few years, the consumer market game software manufacturer Electronic Arts bowed their first commercial market product — a PCB-based game — in London this past January, and Atari has stated their desire to offer more "games for the street" in the near future. A number of small companies have sprung up in Europe as well, with Spain's Gaelco and Belgium's Art & Magic leading the pack. Shop around and ask questions. There's no reason to limit your wish-list to a handful of companies.

The bind for the operator with limited resources is, of course, what to do if the game everyone is talking about is the one that costs an arm and a leg. I wish I had a pat answer that would make everyone happy. I don't. Many of the people I've spoken with at the past few trade shows I've been to (ATEI, IMA, AOU, ACME) predict that a lot of smaller, "mom & pop" arcade operations are going to go under this year. Whether this will actually come about or not remains to be seen. Certainly the mood at ACME was upbeat. But it would be unwise (and unrealistic) to try to wish away all the new technologies that are helping to increase prices. Investigate all your options, learn as much as you can about the changes affecting your industry, and, most of all, plan ahead. Platitudes, perhaps, but while you might not have much control over prices, you should at least have control of yourself. ■

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Managing Editor
Takashi Muroi (T)

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Editorial Office

Coin Journal Co., Ltd.
4F Mark Best Bldg., 2-10-19 Higashinuma,
Kita-ku, Osaka, 530 Japan.
Tel. 81-6-354-9891 Fax. 81-6-354-9898

Tokyo Branch

Dougenzaka Bldg. 6F, 5-4,
Maruyama-cho, Shibuyaku, Tokyo,
150 Japan.

Printed by Nihon Denshoku Co., Ltd.

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TRANSLATIONS Readers wishing to receive translations of any news reports or features published in JAPAN AMUSEMENT MONTHLY, in any language, should fax the JAM Editorial Department with details of articles to be translated. Prices quoted will depend on the length of reports.

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EXCHANGE RATE All monetary figures in this month's issue are based on an exchange rate of ¥105= US\$1.00.



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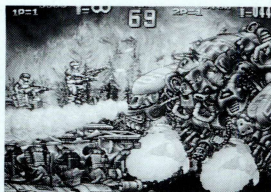
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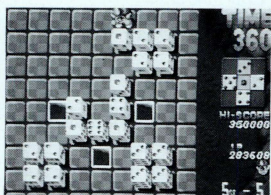
GEO STORM



This is a horizontal-scroll action shooting game whose game play and content are similar to the company's *Gun Force*. Available in high-resolution graphics. Price and release date not available at press time.

Irem

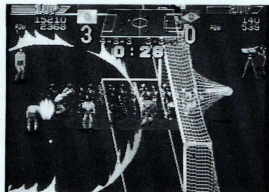
DICE DICE DICE



Toss several die laid out on a 9 x 9 grid, and try to get them to come up sevens so as to make them disappear within a set amount of time. For display only.

Irem

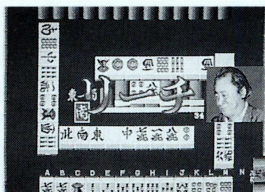
BEST ELEVEN



Irem's first video soccer game. Various skills such as super shoot, direct shoot and foul play are available. The computer broadcasts the game instantly. Released last month.

Atena

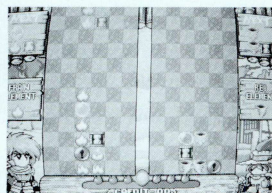
PRO MAH-JONNG KIWAME



In this mah-jongg video game, a player can challenge real mah-jongg professionals. Price and release date not available. Displayed by Sammy Industries.

Atlus

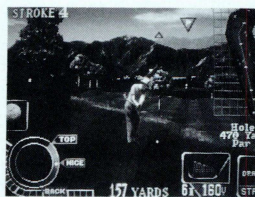
NANAME DE MAGIC



The object of this two-player competitive puzzle game is to line up three tiles of the same pattern faster than your opponent. If so, you can make an attack on your opponent's field. A life gauge, a first for this genre, has been introduced.

Konami

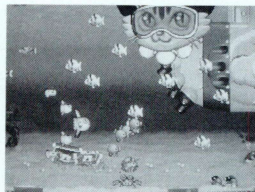
GOLFING GREATS 2



This upgraded version of *Golfing Greats* features high-resolution 3D graphics. Computer power is provided by a new chip, the PSAC4. Three different kinds of play mode are available. Now on sale.

Konami

FANTASTIC JOURNEY



A horizontal scroll shooting game. Besides the addition of new characters, two-person simultaneous play is now possible, giving players a more exciting game.

Sammy

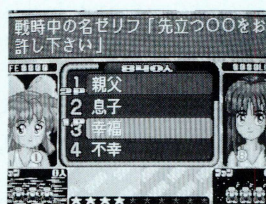
DEADLY SPORT



A martial arts action game using digitized graphics. An SSV release. Features a variety of attacks and dramatic finishes. Price and release date not available at press time.

Sun Electronics

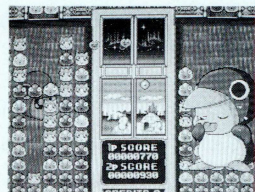
QUIZ AIM IDOL



Choose from one of four attractive female characters, and increase the number of her fans by answering a variety of questions. Features story and competition modes. Price and release date not available at press time.

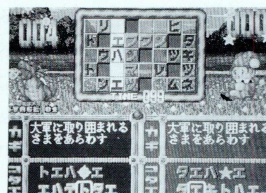
Sun Electronics

HEBEREKENO POPUUN



A puzzle game based on eight unique characters. Line up characters of the same color which are falling from the top of the screen either vertically, horizontally or diagonally to make them disappear. Scheduled for late April release.

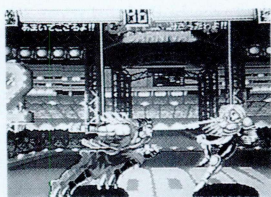
Sun Electronics CHANTA TO SUE NO CROSS DE PON



A video game that incorporates a cross-word puzzle. Complete words by matching letters with missing places, following hints given. The price and release date not available at press time.

ADK

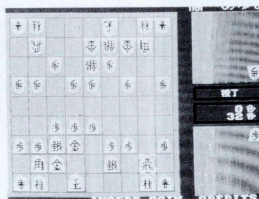
WORLD HEROS 2 JET



This updated version introduces two new characters, bringing the total to 16. Players can choose their characters based on speed, attacking power, defending power, and normal.

Seta

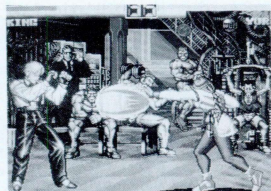
MAYJINSEN



A mah-jongg video game where a player is pitted against a gal character. The use of a RISC chip speeds up opponent's response time, no matter how complex your strategy.

SNK

ART OF FIGHTING 2



Volume two in the series features different perspectives for close-up shots, giving players more of a feel of being in the battle. Ten new characters have been added.

Taito

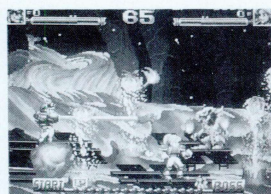
LIGHT BRINGER



This is an action adventure game viewed from corner angles. Players try to avoid a variety of traps and gadgets popping out of 30 rooms per stage. Now on sale.

SNK

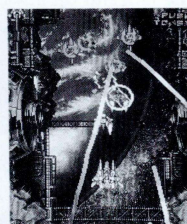
TOP HUNTER



A horizontal scroll-action game pitting two players in a fight against space pirates. The action takes place on four planets including a windy planet with strong gales.

Taito

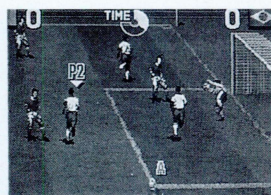
RAY FORCE



A vertical scroll shooting game with a new attacking system called "Lock on Laser." The screen offers close-up angles and multi-layered scrolling. Now on sale.

SNK

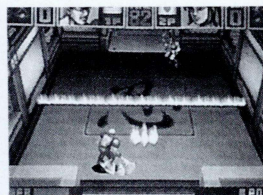
SUPER SIDE KICKS 2



This game captures the excitement of World Cup Soccer. In this second edition, the number of competitors has been increased from 12 to 48 teams. Players can also create their own teams. On display only.

East Technology

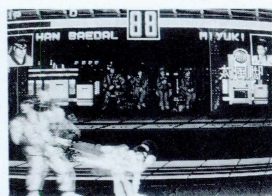
SLAP SHOT



Hockey players from six countries battle it out in this new sports game. The combination of 8-directional joysticks and two buttons create special tricks, and control various actions. Price and release date not available at press time. Displayed by Taito.

SNK

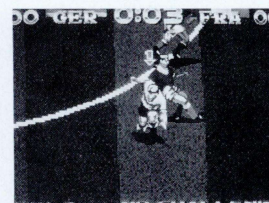
FIGHT FEVER



This is a one-on-one fighting action game where characters battle it out three falls per play. Nine characters are available, each having special tricks. Price and release date not available at press time.

Tecmo

TECMO WORLD CUP '94



The Tecmo World Cup soccer game is back in a new version for 1994. The new version has a broader viewing angle, bigger characters, and realistic passing. Teams from 16 countries are available. Now on sale.

Capcom SUPER STREET FIGHTER II: TURBO



This release of SF series has the same number of characters to choose from as its predecessor. Each character now has a special combination of attacks, including "super combination." Now on sale.

Data East

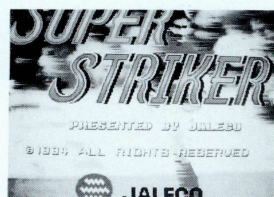
FIGHTER'S HISTORY DYNAMITE



This is an updated version of *Fighter's History* for the NEO* GEO system. Player performance is improved with the addition of new characters and techniques. Now on sale.

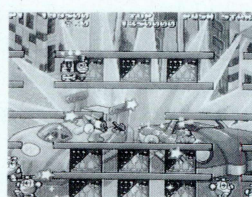
Jaleco

SUPER STRIKER



This is the company's second "Mega System 32" soccer game. It features 3 dimensional viewing angles.

Face

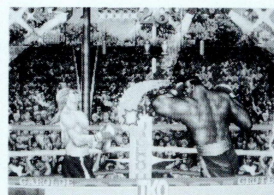


ZUPAPA!

This is the action puzzle game that features cute comical characters and colorful playfield. There are two ways to attack enemies. Defeat all of them to advance to the next stage. Price and release date not available at press time. Displayed by SNK

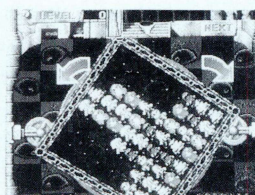
Jaleco

BEST BOUT BOXING



This is the first boxing action game that makes use of the Mega System 32 board. The action is fast and furious as the on-screen characters bob and weave. 7 characters available. Now on sale.

Face



GURURIN

This puzzle game features tiles that revolve in mid-air while falling from the top of the screen. Line up more than three tiles of the same color to make them disappear. Price and release date not available at press time.

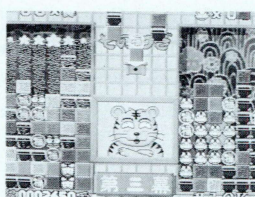
Sega Enterprises

THE J-LEAGUE 1994



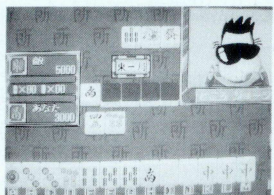
A video soccer game licensed by Japan's J League. 12 teams, including some actual J-League teams, are available. The combination of one joystick and three buttons controls various tricks. Price and release date not available at press time.

Visco KOKON TOZAI E TO MONOGATARI



This puzzle game contains a variety of animal characters. Line up three items of the same color falling from the top of the screen to make them disappear.

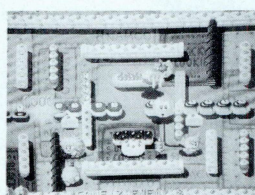
Sega Enterprises TOKORO SAN NO MA MA JAN! 2



The second version of the popular video mah-jongg game features popular TV personality George Tokoro. In this version, players meet him and his friends. Price and release date not available at press time.

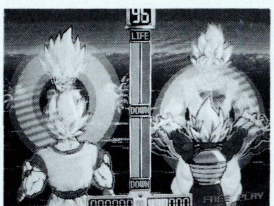
Namco

TINKLE PIT



This action game features a Pac-man-like screen with many characters from previous Namco releases. Do battle with the bad guys and score points from the pit. Eight stages in all.

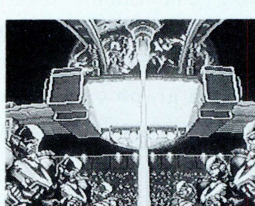
Sega Enterprises DRAGON BALL Z V.R. V.S. (proposed)



A martial art fighting game based on characters from the popular cartoon Dragon Ball Z. One lever and three buttons control punching, jumping, and special tricks.

Video System

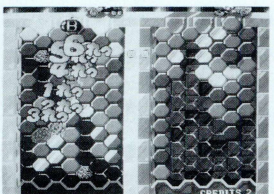
SUPER VOLLEY '94



Super Volley 91 is back as a dedicated software kit for the NEO *GEO system. Two different modes are available. 13 kinds of attacks are realized with the combination controller and button. Displayed by Taito.

Sega Enterprises

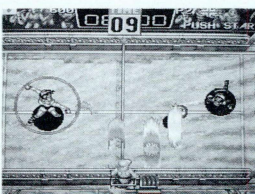
POTO POTO



In this puzzle game, the object is to line up more than four hexagonal blocks, called Poto stones, of the same color in a hive-like structure to make them disappear. Price and release date not available at press time.

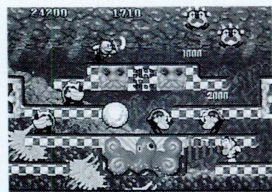
Data East

WINDJAMMERS



Players do combat with frisbees in this game. Besides high and low-altitude throws, players may execute joystick-button combinations for special throws and catches. Now on sale.

Toa Plan **OTENKI PARADISE SNOW BROS** (proposed)



The successor to the company's popular video game *Snow Brothers*. Four princes (Window, Rain, Thunder, and Snow) battle it out with a evil king. Four player simultaneous play possible.

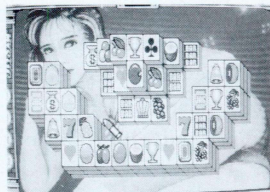
Nova



COPS

This driving and shooting game comes in a dedicated cabinet with a wide screen. Laser disc reproduces car chases and shooting action. Displayed by Sega Enterprises.

Naka Nihon Wreath



RONG RONG

A puzzle game where the object is to connect two identical tiles in order to make them disappear. Clear all tiles within a set amount of time to advance to the next round.

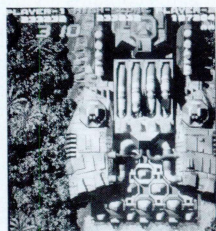
Jaleco



F-1 SUPER BATTLE

A 32-bit driving game with graphics that make roadside stones, pavements, turf, and asphalt seem real. Three courses are available, including urban, mountain, and nighttime tracks.

Namco



NEBULASRAY

A vertical scroll shooting game set in outer space. This one features 3D computer graphics for a more realistic appearance. Control is via an 8-directional joystick and 2 buttons.

Sega Enterprises



DAYTONA USA

This single-player driving game features Sega's advanced Model 2 computer graphics board and a 50" projector, which offers increased realism. Three courses of different levels are available.



Sega Enterprises



HARD DUNK

A video game based on a three-on-three basketball format. You win when your team scores twelve points first. Six player simultaneous play is possible.

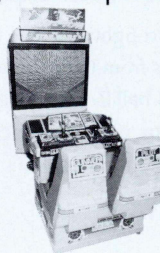
Konami



RACING FORCE

A driving game with the "C-car" famous from the Le Mans 24 Hour race. Available in Sauroid cabinet. New PSAC4 graphics chip on CPU creates more realistic action. Now on sale.

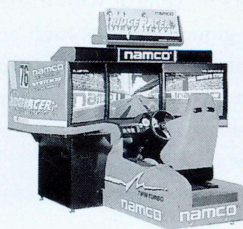
Sega Enterprises



STAR WARS

A space battle game licensed from the third "Star Wars" movie. It features full polygon-shaped graphics. Two player play also possible. Price and release date not available at press time.

Namco



RIDGE RACER TM

Namco's *Ridge Racer* is back in this new three monitor version. Cabinet features three 33" monitors and the new System 22 hardware provides for an ultra-realistic screen appearance. Size: 1.93 m L x 2.49 m W x 2.11 m H.

Sega Enterprises



JURASSIC PARK

An action simulator based on the 1993's hit movie "Jurassic Park." The game features a two-moving-seat cabinet. Each player has a tranquilizer gun to do battle with prehistoric beasts.

Taito

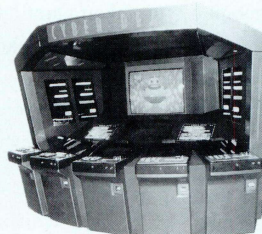
VC-X



The Virtual Cube-X, this is Taito's latest high-tech simulation machine, developed in concert with Sanyo. Features 3D projection system. Still under development.

Sigma

CYBER DEAL



Black Jack is back as a multi-player game for five persons. The game has a futuristic design, and three computerized dealers appear on the screen.

Sigma

MECHANICAL SLOT SERIES



Two new types of game, both which feature a free game, have been added to the company's slot game series. They include the 4-reel *Marine Blue* and the 5-reel *World Cup*. Release date not available at press time.

Data East

TALES FROM THE CRYPT



This is the company's 21st pinball game, licensed from the popular U.S. comic book and T.V. program. Features dot matrix display and sound effects taken from the program. Now on sale.

Sigma

KING LOTUS SERIES



These video poker games use a 19" high-resolution monitor. New software packages have been added to the six existing titles. Release date not available at press time.

Bally

POPEYE



Taito is the distributor for this Bally pinball machine, based on the world-famous cartoon character Popeye. Flip ball so that it twice hits "jab" on the playfield and go into multi-ball play.

Sigma

SUPER 8 WAYS



Two new additions to the company's *Super 8 Ways* series. One is *Hot Lines*, which features a maximum payout of 100,000 tokens and the other is the 9-reel *Scatters Fan*. Release date not available at press time.

Premier Technology

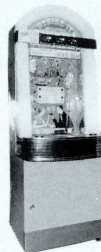
WIPE OUT



This Premier pinball features skiing as its theme. If players clear five mini rounds, a more exciting "triple diamond run" mode begins. Displayed by Sammy Industries. Now on sale.

Sigma

STRIKE RICH



In this pachinko-type token game, players insert tokens from the top. If the token hits the target at the bottom, the player wins tokens.

Irem

BLACK JACK II



The latest release in the company's popular token machine *Black Jack*. This one comes in a newly-designed cabinet and with more picture patterns to be lined up. Five and three player play are available.

大人向けメダルゲーム

TOKEN GAMES FOR ADULTS

Takara Goraku

TROPICAL ISLAND

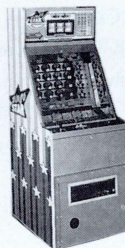
A pachinko-type token game. If three 7s are lined up, 90 tokens are paid out. Now on sale.



Sammy

BINGO STAR

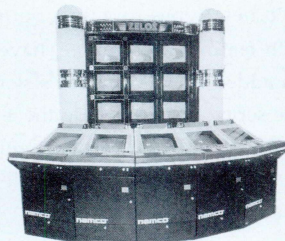
This game combines the fun of bingo, slot and pusher machines. Throw tokens into a series of cups laid out in a 4 x 4 grid. Line them up in any direction to win tokens. Now on sale.



Namco

ZELOS

A slot game with 8 lines and 9 monitors for five people. Players can bet up to 20 tokens on one line. If they win, they can double their bet. For display only.



Sega Enterprises

CROSS SLOT

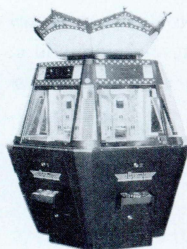
A video token game, which features cross-shaped reels. If more than three same icons are lined up, tokens are dispensed.



Irem

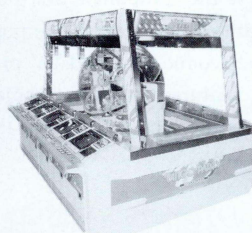
CASINO FANTASY

This is a compact-sized pusher game for six players. Video slot machine reels begin spinning when the token enters the checker. Coins get pushed out if reels match horizontally or diagonally. Price and release date not available at press time.



Sega Enterprises **BINGO PARTY MULTI CARD** (proposed)

The updated version of company's *Bingo Party*. In this version, a player can select one from six bingo cards and bet on it. Price and release date not available at press time.



Atlus

TORESURO MEDAL VERSION

A simple slot-typed token game with three reels. Double-up option is also available, offering more exciting game play. Still under development.



Sega Enterprises

GOLDEN KENO

In this bingo-like token game, the player randomly chooses 10 numbers and the computer 20, among 80 possibilities. If the computer chooses more than four of same combinations the player did, tokens are dispensed.



Kato Manufacturing

DYNAMITE SHOT II

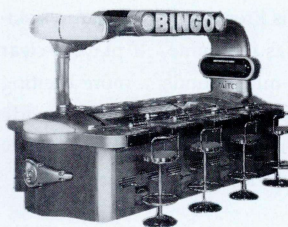
The third version of the company's popular pachinko-based game *Dynamite Shot*. It features a color liquid crystal slot on the center. Line up the symbols to open the goal. Now on sale.



Taito

BINGO WAVE

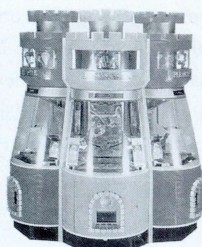
A large-sized bingo game for 8 players. Guess which holes the five balls rolling on the playfield will fall in. The winner can challenge for a double-up game.



Konami

PLEASURE CASTLE

A push-token machine with a colorful, castle-like feel to the cabinet. The playfield is reminiscent of an amusement park. Six cabinets constitute a complete unit, but each can be utilized separately. Now on sale.



Dynax

MAH JONGG CAFE DOLL

This is a mah-jongg quiz with a variety of features, including a number of special mini-games such as roulette and poker.



Taiyo Jidoki

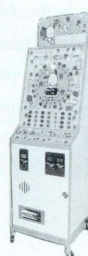
ALL 7



The newest video slot machine in the company's *Frontier* series line comes with three reels and eight lines. The icons used are red and green 7s. Now on sale.

Maruka

POCHAKO NO UKIUKI PICADILLY



A roulette-type token game that uses a liquid-crystal slot machine display. If the wheel stops on your lucky mark, tokens are dispensed according to the bet you placed and the odds on the spin.

Fuji Denshi

ARUCARD



This game combines craps and roulette. Bet on a number from one to six; the roulette wheel throws the die. Play until the wheel stops on "game over." Now on sale.

K-Mic

HANGYO TO SAYURI NO YOH'IDON



A token game for children. Guess which one of the two cute characters will cross the finish line first and win.

Fuji Denshi

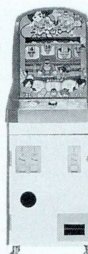
GREAT ADVENTURE



A pusher token game for six players. With the conveyer belt, a lot of tokens can be dispensed. This one has its own unique bonus function. Scheduled for July release.

Konami

DAMU DAMU BOY



This token game is designed for shopping centers and features Konami's character Ricky. If Ricky scores a goal, tokens are paid out according to the number the goals point at. Now on sale.

Fuji Denshi

GREAT VIKING



In this single-player token game, two die are rolled. Guess which one is bigger to win. If your guess is right, you can continue in the double-up game. Scheduled for June release.

Komaya

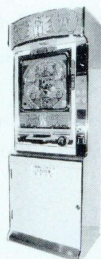
CIRCUS BALL



A simple token game for children. Launch a pachinko ball so that it falls into the loop in the center, and the roulette wheel starts to revolve. If it stops on a designated spot, tokens are dispensed.

Yubis

PACHINKO (proposed)



A fever-type pachinko token game. If a certain amount of balls fall into a designated place, tokens are dispensed.

Komaya

FANTASY LAND



A roulette-based children's token game for one to four players. Match numbers on LEDs to win a maximum of 48 tokens. Game goes into "fever" mode if your number comes up. Now on sale.

Sunwise

DORAEMON NO SLOT



The faces of characters from the Doraemon comic book have been split into three parts. Line up the parts and complete a picture to win tokens. Now on sale.

子供向けメダルゲーム

TOKEN GAMES FOR CHILDREN

Sunwise

POWER KICK



A video token game based on a soccer tournament. Three different versions are available, including a token roulette game where a player kicks shots at the roulette wheel. Now on sale.

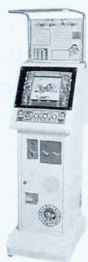
Banpresto **SUPER MARIO KART DOKI DOKI RACE**



A multi-player go-kart racing token game with a Super Mario Bros. motif. Players place bets on which of the five karts will be the winner and the runner-up. Maximum payout is 96 tokens.

Sunwise

ANIMAL MATCH



A video slot-type token machine for children. Match three pictures of animals to win tokens. Available in the company's SS 91 cabinet with a 14" monitor. Now on sale.

Yuei



FISHING CAPTAIN

Players win tokens by catching fish with a "fishline" LED while avoiding empty cans or trash. Price and release date not available at press time.

Eagle

DREAM TURBO

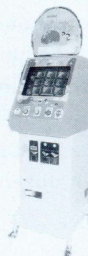


In this children's token game, if a token is successfully put into the "start" hole, the roulette wheel starts to spin. Tokens are paid out according to the picture patterns lined up. Displayed by Taito.



Taiyo Jidoki

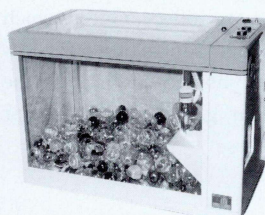
LET'S GO GYAOS



A children's slot-type token game with a green dinosaur design. Push buttons to stop three spinning reels. If the center row is all green dinosaurs, you win another game.

SNK

CAPSULE KIDS



A compact crane game for one player. Control panel is set low so children can play with ease. Exterior design different from the average crane game. Still under development.

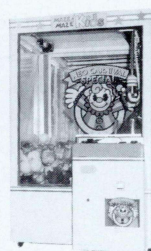
Takara Amusement **GO! GO! MARIO CIRCUIT**



A token game that features go-kart racing. Five cars named after the Nintendo Mario characters race around a circuit one and half times.

SNK

MAH-ZEH MAH-ZEH KID



Pronounced "mah-zeh mah-zeh," it means to mix something. Game equipped with button to stir up prizes. Controls set low for children to play easily. Prototype on display.

Togo

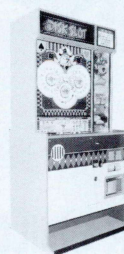
UMANOSUKE



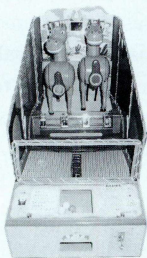
A video prize game for children, where cute horse characters race each other. Bet up to three tokens on which will win. Now on sale.

Kato Manufacturing

DISC SLOT



A bingo-style prize game. The object: Stop three-interlocked revolving discs with a button. If the same icons of each disc are lined up, a prize is dispensed. Three tries for one token.

Kato Manufacturing

LUCKY HORSE

A carnival prize game, where the player has to throw balls at the tail of a horse doll with an LED. If a ball hits it, the horse lashes out at a prize which is then dispensed.

Sammy

PANIC ISLAND

Advance towards the goal by playing dice with your opponents in this prize game. Whoever has the higher score advances. If you lose three times, game is over. For display only.

Kato Manufacturing

HARA HARA JUNGLE

A carnival prize game where a player tries to lead an explorer doll holding a 75-mm capsule prize to the goal by avoiding the disruption of surrounding animal dolls. Scheduled for June release.

Sammy

HELLO KITTY NO HARA HARA CAKE PANIC

A prize game for children's arcades based on the popular Sanrio character Hello Kitty. Choose from one of four games. Player wins a prize if they win their chosen game.

Capcom

CANDY DREAM

A crane machine with a robot-like feel to the cabinet. In this game, the target prizes are candies. For two players. Size: 1.26 m L x 0.9 m W x 1.05 m H.

Sunwise

HAPPY BELL

A large prize game based on "ring the bell" muscleman games. Hit the button so the arrow rises to the level of a prize you have selected. If it stops there, the prize is yours.

Kita Nihon Tsushin

HORO HORO TREMENDOUS III

A roulette-style prize game that can deposit two kinds of prizes of different sizes (100-mm and 50-mm capsule) for *ohatari* ("big win") and *atari* ("win") respectively. Displayed by Mexico Corp.

Sunwise

JANKENMAN JUMBO!

The company's popular *Jankenman* is back in a larger size. Players play rock-scissors-paper with the computer. Winning three times gets a 75-mm capsule prize and a card. Price and release date not available at press time.

Maruka

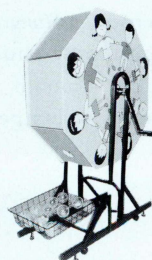
OSARU NO MONCHICHI NO TOTTE KUDASARU

A compact crane game decorated with characters from the Sanrio Corp's catalogue. In this version, the characters are tiny monkeys (*Osaruno Monchichi*). Suitable for only 75-mm capsules. Displayed by K-Mic Japan.

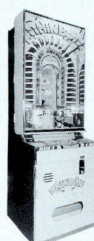
Showa Giken

CYCLONE

A dome-shaped prize game for up to four. Players win a 150-mm capsule prize if the roulette wheel stops on "win" mark. Price and release date not available at press time. Displayed by Tecmo.

K-Mic

GARAPON

A lottery-esque machine that, instead of numbered balls, however, dispenses prize capsules. Manual or automatic operation. Price and release date not available at press time.

Showa Giken

RAINBOW

Manipulate a light with a track ball so it stops at a designated point in this prize game. Players win capsule prizes if they succeed. Displayed by Tecmo.

Sega Enterprises



KONGFALL

A children's prize game with a gorilla motif. The Kongster pushes a prize capsule towards different holes. Guess which hole it's going to fall in and win that prize. Now on sale.

Tasko



SUPER SOCCER

A soccer-based skill game. Kick the soccer ball past a goalkeeper moving back and forth to score points. On sale in Japan now.

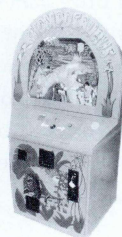
Sega Enterprises



UFO CATCHER EX

This update features a new crane design and an LED dot matrix display that presents a message appropriate to the game situation. Bonus game features roulette wheel action.

Tecmo



CHONBO ZAURUSU

Feed a dinosaur doll with food, that falls from the top of the screen with a lever in this novelty game. Score a fixed number of points to win a prize. On display only.

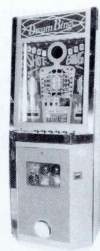
Sega Enterprises



SONIC NO SPACE TOURS

A roulette-type game using Sonic the Hedgehog. If the airplane spinner hits your number, you win a 75-mm capsule prize. Win a 35-mm prize if you miss. On sale last month.

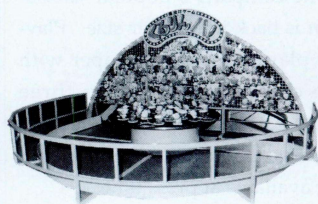
Tecmo



DREAM BINGO

The object of this pachinko-based game is to line up five balls vertically, horizontally, or diagonally to receive a prize. Release date unavailable at press time.

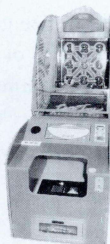
Takara Amusement



KURURINPA

Throw rings in this novelty game. Targets rotate on a large eye-catching turntable. Options including scenic backdrop and other features can be changed. Now on sale.

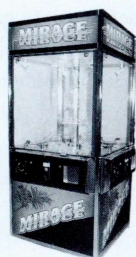
Togo



LINE BALL 2

Game play remains the same as its predecessor. However, cabinet design is more colorful, and has better sound effects. Also comes with a built-in prize dispenser.

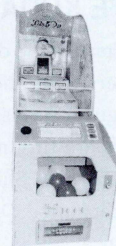
Takara Amusement



MIRAGE

A prize machine that uses a flashy mirror and crystal-refracted lighting to make prize display more appealing. Features compact design. For display only.

Togo



DISH ON

Get five balls past blockers and onto the plates within the time limit in this novelty game. Features built-in prize dispenser. Now on sale.

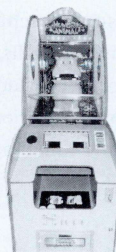
Takara Goraku



HAT TRICKER PK

A soccer penalty kick-based prize game. Shoot by stepping on a foot pedal. If you score three times out of five, you win either a prize or a free game.

Togo



HUNGRY ANIMAL II

The new version of *Hungry Animal*. Win points by chucking balls into hippo's mouth. Connect machines for competitive play.

Togo



FIGHTING POSE

Punch a life-sized doll of a boxer that ducks and feints in all directions. After the bout, the player's score is displayed and he or she is rated in one of four ranks.

Banpresto YUYUHAKUSHYO REIGEKI ROULETTE



A roulette game based on a popular Japanese cartoon character where players win cards if their numbers come up on the wheel.

Togo



AMERICAN SHOT II

The sequel to *American Shot*, a novelty game based on American football. Comes with a built-in prize dispenser. Several units can be linked together.

Banpresto



LUCKY DICE SERIES

Play a game of high-low for this card-dispensing game. Players "roll" the dice, hoping to match high (8-12) or low (2-7) with the game. If matched, a character-based card is dispensed.

Towa Japan



WONDER SHOT

A pachinko-type prize game in a large cabinet. Players have to shoot a 140-mm jumbo capsule prize at the target hole. Price and release date not available at press time.

Banpresto SAILOR MOON R: GINSUISHO NO YOGEN



Players can receive a card based on a popular Japanese comic book character in this fortune-telling game. Win the card by stopping the rotating dome so the Sailor Moon doll faces front.

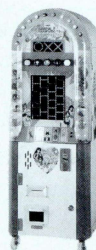
Namco



NEW SWEET FACTORY

A new version of *Sweet Factory*, a crane game that dispenses a variety of different-sized prizes. In this edition, independent turn tables for single and two-player play are employed.

Banpresto



SAILOR MOON R: ZIGZAG

A prize game based on a popular Japanese cartoon character. Based on a lottery game format, each player tries their luck three times. One victory earns a card, two a capsule, and three both.

Banpresto SUPER MARIO WORLD JANKEN FUKUBIKI



Play rock-scissors-paper with Mario in this one. Win once and get a card. Win twice and receive a capsule prize. Win three times and receive both.

Banpresto DRAGON BALL Z: JUMBO ROULETTE



A large roulette wheel and eye-catching design are the hallmarks of this game. If the player's number comes up, s/he wins a capsule prize. Three tries per play. On sale in June.

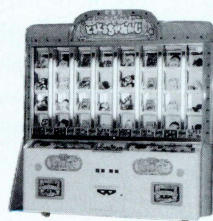
Banpresto



NERATTE DUNK

The company's fourth release is a prize game that dispenses a jumbo-size card. This version is based on a popular Japanese comic book. If a roulette wheel stops on *atari* (hit), a card is dispensed.

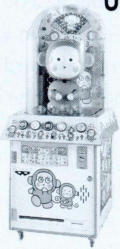
Banpresto



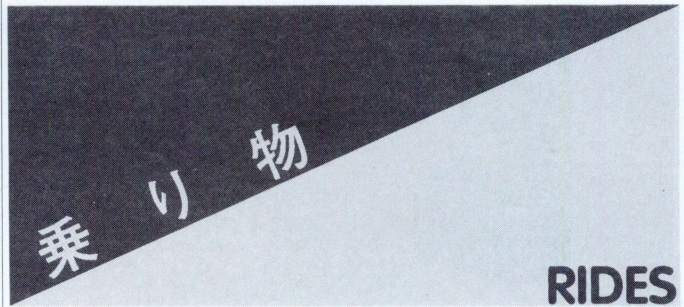
TORU TORU CHALLENGE

In this new prize game, you play rock-scissors-paper with the computer by pushing a button. Win it twice and you select your favorite prize displayed in four rows. On sale next month.

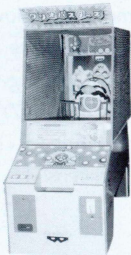
Banpresto

**OSARUNO MONCHICHI
USHIRONO SHOMEN DAREDE GOZARU!**

Choose one of four animal characters and spin a roulette wheel manned by a monkey. If the wheel stops on your character once, you win a card. Twice earns candy, and three times gets both.

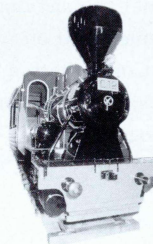
**RIDES**

Banpresto

WARIO BUSTERS

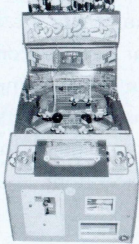
Nail Mario's evil twin brother Wario in this novelty game. He moves back and forth, and the object is to get him back into his cage. Every player wins a card no matter their score.

Asahi Engineering

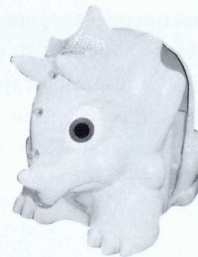
C-12

This miniature train is designed for nature parks. Passenger seats feature wood paneling. Up to five cars can be linked together, seating 60. Now on sale.

Hope

DRIBBLE SHOOT

Shoot soccer balls past the goalie by pressing a button with this one. Playing time and game charge can be altered. Score a designated number of points to win a prize.

Capcom **DINOSAUR'S HUNTING: TRICERATOPS**

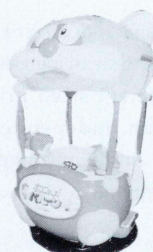
A stationary ride featuring a built-in monitor and a cute triceratops design. Monitor displays a video depicting the world of the dinosaurs. Press button to hear them roar.

Masago

SKY CATCHER

Use a model airplane to snag a prize in this is a new-style prize game. Players have more freedom to select the prize they want. Price and release date are not available at press time.

Capcom

POKONYAAN! BALLOON

A stationary ride with a theme based on a popular cartoon character. Built-in monitor displays animated footage of journeys to six countries. Riders receive a character card.

Yuei

SUMO WRESTLING TOURNAMENT

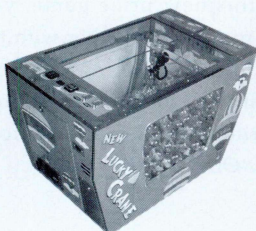
Players try to hit sumo wrestlers with a ball. If the ball goes into the hole behind the wrestler, he falls down. Beat the grand champion and win a capsule prize.

Nippo

FORMULA - 1

This F1-style battery car shakes and rattles. Three kinds of cars are available including a MacLaren. The battery will last five hours. Now on sale.

Yubis

NEW LUCKY CRANE

The update version of *Lucky Crane*. Added feature is the "lucky chance": if rotating lights stop on the lucky mark as a game ends, players win a new game. Now on sale.

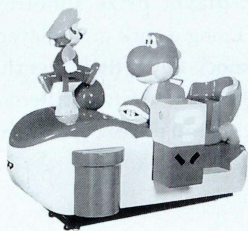
Nippo

CHASING PATROL CAR

A stationary police car ride for up to four. Spin the steering wheel to make it turn left and right, as well as up and down. Now on sale.

Banpresto

SUPER MARIO SEESAW

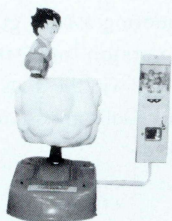


A seesaw with a Super Mario design scheme and seats based on the plumber's pal Yoshi. There are three sound buttons. A character card is also dispensed. Now on sale.



Banpresto

IKE IKE SERIES



This series of stationary rides is equipped with prize dispensers. All are based on popular cartoon and game characters including Ultraman and Dragon Ball Z.

Irem

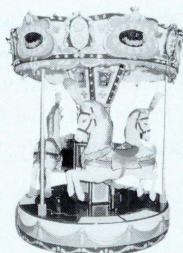
WORLD PK SOCCER



Okay, soccer fans. It's one on one with the goalkeeper in this skill game. Players can compete with computer or each other. Goalie has 12 different blocking positions.

Hope

FANCY GO-ROUND



A compact merry-go-round for three riders featuring an illuminated canopy. Optional tent for outdoor installation is available. Can also play music.

Irem

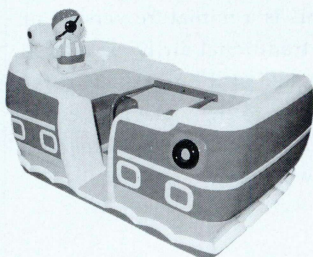
FOREVER RING



This machine uses onomancy (fortune-telling based on one's name) to tell you where you have been and what lies ahead. Choose from 24 genres. On display only.

Mass-set

SWING VIKING



A stationary kiddie ride for up to six. Swing rocks back and forth. No sharp edges for improved safety. Designed for amusement parks. Size: 1.12 m L x 1.96 m W x 1.06 m H. Now on sale.

Irem

LOVELY ARIES



A fortune-telling game using Chinese onomantic techniques. Eight genres to choose from for both couples and individuals. Price and release date not available at press time.



Imax

JANKEN OTOTO



In this novelty game, you first play rock-scissors-paper game with a kabuki actor doll. If you win, you get to whack him with a mallet. On display only.



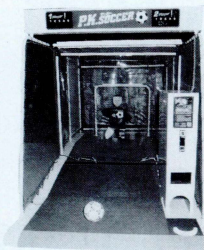
Imax

SMOKE SAURUS: BAKUEN PANIC



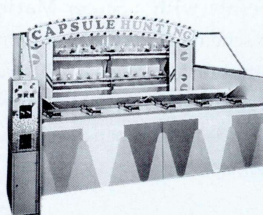
Ten buttons light up and you have to hit the lit one as quickly as possible in this game. Score determines skill level (one of three ranks). For one or two players. On display only.

Imax


P.K. SOCCER

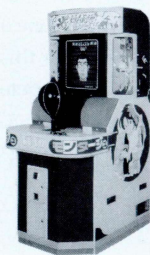
This skill game builds on the growing popularity of soccer in Japan. Get the ball past the goalie to win a prize. Comes with a built-in prize dispensing function. On display only.

Kurita Giken


CAPSULE HUNTING

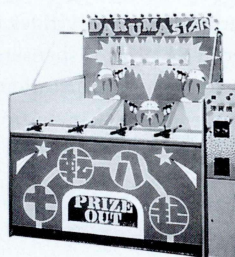
A six-player prize shooting game. Using a cork gun, players try to knock down their favorite prizes lined up on two different rows. Up to 80 prizes per row can be stocked.

Ohira Giken Kogyo


ZAKENJANEIYO!

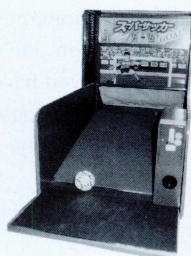
If you want to blow off steam, this game is the answer. Punch a "face" made up of a composite photograph by hitting a punching ball. The computer distorts the "face" to reflect the blows.

Kurita Giken


DARUMA STAR MARK II

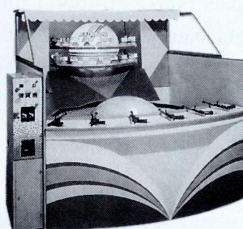
Players knock down Japanese dolls by shooting a cork gun in this new version of *Daruma Master*. Players win the dolls they knock down. Dolls are automatically restocked.

Okamoto Mfg.


SUPER SOCCER

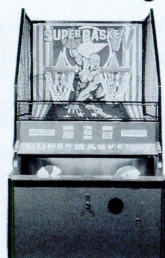
It's penalty kick time. Putting the ball past the goalie is the object of this skill game. Playfield uses artificial turf. Went on sale mid-April.

Kurita Giken


RAINBOW TARGET

A prize shooting game which dispenses candy as the reward. Players shoot down targets with a cork gun. Prizes that have fallen are dispensed automatically.

Okamoto Mfg.


SUPER BASKETBALL W

A basketball free-throw shooting game. In the two-player mode, players compete to score more points within a fixed time limit. Scheduled for May release.

Komaya


MINI CHAMP HOCKEY

This is a miniature version of the traditional air hockey table designed at the right height for children to enjoy playing. Game can be set for time or score limit. Now on sale.

Capcom, Sigma, Togo

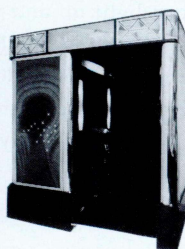

KENSEIMOOGURA

A mole-whacking game based on the popular *SF II* characters Ryu and Chun-li. Play against the computer or compete with a friend. Monitor displays video images appropriate to the whacking action.

Jaleco **HAYAOSHI QUIZ GRAND CHAMPION TAIKAI**


A quiz game that uses the company's System 32 board. Two famous Japanese TV personalities serve as emcees. Game play is similar to its predecessor *Ohza Ketteisen* (The King of Quiz).

Kyugo Trading


LOVE LOVE SIMULATION

Ever wonder what your future child's face might look like? Using graphics technology, this item will combine you and your mate's photograph to give you a possible preview. Now on sale.

Jaleco


SCUD HAMMER

Play rock-scissors-paper five times with an opponent of your own choosing (policewoman, president, etc.). Each time you win, you get to bash their face by hitting a button with a mallet.

Sega Enterprises



AIR CIRCUS

This novelty game features Sonic the Hedgehog's pal Rocky. Object of the game is to throw a plastic ball at Rocky, who blows to make the ball float in the air. For display only.

Taito



ZOO KEEPER

Shoot balls into the mouths of animals as they open and close. Object is to see how many shots can be made within time limit. Manufactured by Taito America. Still under development.

Sega Enterprises



BINGO CARNIVAL

A novelty game with a bingo approach. Throw balls at targets laid out on a 4 x 4 grid, and get four across in any direction within a set time limit. For display only.

Takara Amusement



CAN CAN KID

In this novelty game, attack a house full of nasty kids by using a pellet gun. Win a prize by scoring 70 points or more. For display only.

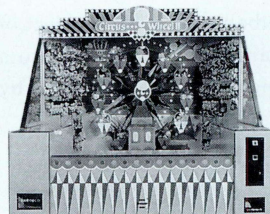
Sega Enterprises



CRAZY ROBO

Chuck balls into a robot moving back and forth and bobbing up and down with this novelty game. Up to eight machines can be connected. For display only.

Tasko



CIRCUS WHEEL II

With automatic prize dispenser, staffing needs are minimal for this large-scale novelty piece. Features colorful design and lively sound effects.

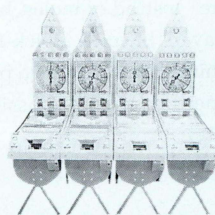
Sega Enterprises



CURLING HOLIDAY

A novelty game featuring the Becky character from Sonic the Hedgehog. Becky floats on a field of air and the object is to land her on the circular target. For display only.

Tasko/ Elton Amusements



BEAT THE CLOCK

Big Ben has arrived in Japan as a novelty game. Get balls into the holes to move the clock hands forward. Win a prize when it reaches its starting point. Manufactured by Elton Amusements.

Taito



UNDER FIRE

A two-player shooting game based on U.S. television action programs. Features digitized graphics and an upright cabinet. Players fight through eight stages.

Tasko



DUNK SHOOT

A two-player free throw game with a low hoop. Object is to take shots despite a gorilla that moves up and down to block them. Players win commemorative tokens.

Taito



REAL PUNCHER

A new twist on the punching game genre with this 3rd SSB board release. Game can photograph a face; punches to the target are then reflected on that face through digital manipulation.

Data East



GUPPY CHAN KIKI IPPATSU

This company's first mole-whacking-style game. Save Guppy, a cute goldfish in the center, by beating up five tortoises gunning for our hero. Scheduled for a spring release.

Tecmo

SHARK FRENZY



In this carnival game, hit sharks attacking a boat by throwing balls. But be careful, because these sharks are pretty small. Where's Richard Dreyfus when you need him. For display only.

Doyle International

JACK & THE BEANSTALK



From the company's Children's Games series. Object is to throw balls into a basket at Jack's feet. Get them in and up he goes. Player wins if Jack passes a designated point.

Tecmo

WANI PAKKUN



Throw balls at alligators in this carnival game. Save three little pigs from the hungry gators attacking them. Comes with a built-in prize dispenser. For display only.

Doyle International

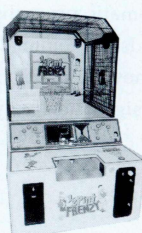
THREE LITTLE PIGS



An entry in the company's Children's Story Book game series. Throw as many balls as you can at the little pigs within a fixed time period. Now on sale.

Tecmo/I.C.E

1/2 PINT FRENZY



This is a novelty game with a basketball theme. The object of the game to throw balls into a moving hoop. Manufactured by I.C.E. Still under development.

Namco

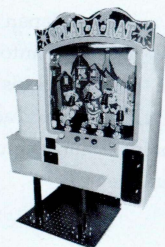
GODZILLA WARS



An electro-mechanical shooting game with a Godzilla theme. A one-meter Godzilla doll advances toward the player, who shoots it with a laser-beam gun. Now on sale.

Tecmo

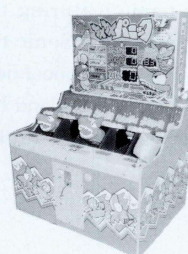
SPLAT · A · RAT



A variation on the mole-whacking genre. Instead of moles, however, players have to attack four rats by hitting buttons. Two player competitive play is possible. On display.

Namco

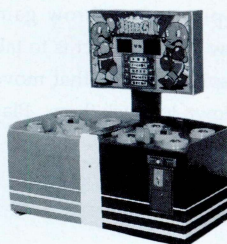
SHARK BASHING



A novelty game where a player beats on five sharks with a mallet. After the game, machine gives player one of five ranks based on their score. Scheduled to be released this spring.

Togo

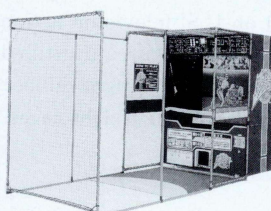
TAIKO MOGURA



An updated version of Togo's popular mole-whacking game. Layout has been changed so players can play side by side, and the cabinet is more compact. Displayed by Yubis.

Namco

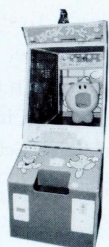
GOKYU DENSETSU PITCH IN 2



A pitching machine with practice and play modes. In the first mode, pitch speed is measured. New feature: the game announces whether a pitch is a strike or a ball. Now on sale.

Togo

PAC PAC KIRBY



A novelty game based on a popular Nintendo character. Object of the game is to throw balls into its mouth. You win if you can set in more than the designated number.

Namco

SHOOT AWAY II: RAPID FIRE



This modified version features a rapid fire mode. Players can hit targets quicker and score more points. New dip switch can change it to normal mode. Now on sale.

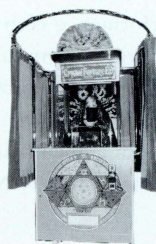
Namco



X-DAY

Black humor with this one. Players enter information about their eating habits, health, etc., and receive a printout telling them how many more days they have left to live! Now on sale.

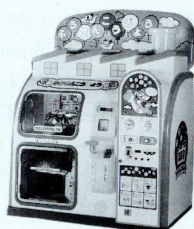
Human



CRYSTAL FORTUNE ED

The second version of *Crystal Fortune*. The life-sized robot fortune teller reads a crystal ball to answer your questions in six genres. A couple's compatibility can also be told.

Banpresto



BALLOON FACTORY

This balloon factory uses a Super Mario design scheme. Customers can buy one of two kinds of balloon. Takes 50 seconds. Play with a Super Mario doll while you wait.



Banpresto **SUPER MARIO WORLD POPCORN**



A popcorn vending machine with a Super Mario theme. Three flavors to choose from, and you can play roulette (!) while waiting. Now on sale.

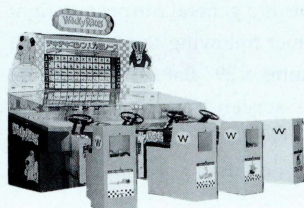
Early One

TSE-188, TSE-288



Both are compact-sized components needed for the company's newly-developed central management system to realize a more rational location management approach. TSE-288 is a terminal, and TSE-188 is a data buffer.

Banpresto **CHIKI CHIKI MACHINE JINRIKI MOH RACE**



A carnival game for four players based on Chiki Chiki Machine. Participants try to have their characters make a circle three times, and have them finish the first line by pedaling.

Early One

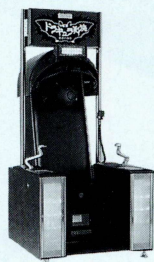
MRW-201 MEMBER'S BOX



A sort of a box to deposit and dispense customers' tokens. With this box, customers can withdraw their deposited tokens by just inserting a magnet card.

Human

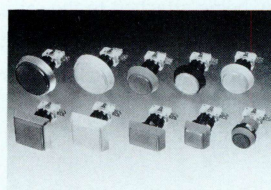
DRACULA'S LIE DETECTOR



A lie-detecting test game. Answer "no" to questions the computer asks. It then creates a psychological profile based on your reactions, and prints out the result. Very private questions also can be asked. Now on sale.

Asahi Engineering

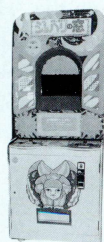
IPM-B



Very flat illuminated buttons. Each component is detachable with one-touch. Comes with a micro switch, and available in a variety of shapes and colors. Now on sale.

Human

THE JOHALI'S WINDOW



A psychological testing game that incorporates the Magic Mask System. The computer asks you questions from four genres including money, job, love and sex. Play continue option is available.

Asahi Engineering

AC-1000T



This is a high-quality, multi-functional change machine and token dispenser with an automatic collection function. It can accept three kinds of denomination including ¥1,000 bills, ¥500 and ¥100 coins. Now on sale.

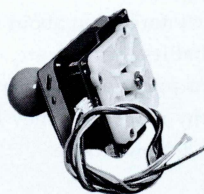
Asahi Engineering



AC-2000T

High-performance coin/token dispensers with timers for automatic collection. With door in the closed position, tokens or coins in the hopper are automatically sent to the internal cash box. Now on sale.

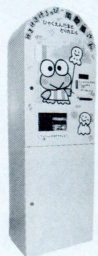
Seimitsu Kogyo



LS-40 PCB TYPE

The company's popular long-lasting and rust resistant joysticks. A micro switch and a PC board are attached in this type. Suitable for mass production. Now on sale.

Sayama Seimitsu Kogyo

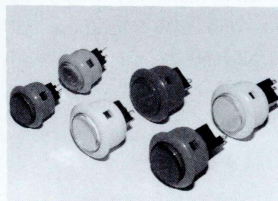


EX-252ASA

A compact change machine that handles not only ¥1,000 bills, ¥500 and ¥100 coins, but tokens. With two hoppers, two kinds of denominations are changed at once. Displayed by K-Mic Japan.

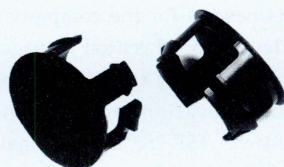
Seimitsu Kogyo

PS-14 CLEAN BUTTON SERIES



The series include a 24-mm diameter button (PS-14-D) and 30-mm diameter button (PS-14-GX). Both of them come equipped with transparent colorful caps. Now on sale.

Sanwa Denshi



OBSM-30A

A line-up of 30-mm caps fit for button holes in a control panel. They can be attached more easily than existing ones. Now on sale.

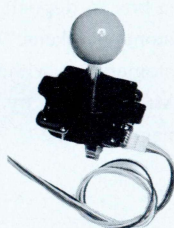
Takara Amusement



150-mm CAPSULE

A line-up of large colorful capsules suitable for the company's latest carnival game *Super Challenge Shoot*. Available in five colors. Now on sale.

Sanwa Denshi



JLF-TP-8

A joystick lever with PC board and a micro switch. Suitable for any cabinet. Now on sale.

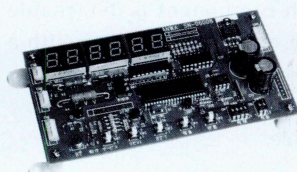
Marine Game



29 INCH AVENUE

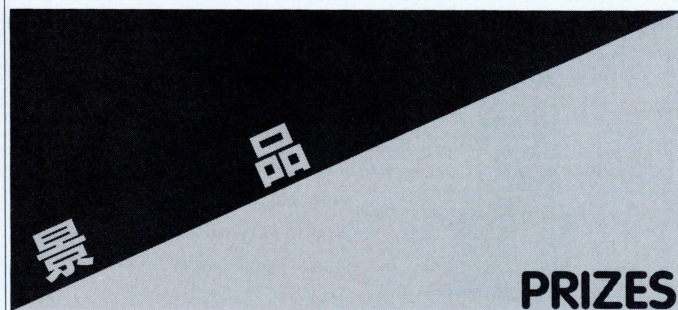
This is a general purpose upright cabinet following the 25" Ace. It features a 29" flat square monitor. The screen can be alternated between vertical and horizontal. Now on sale.

Sanwa Denshi



T-94A

A circuit board that sets playing time by being attached to the cabinet. By using it, a game's ending is determined based on time rather than lives or energy lost. Good for beginners.



Banpresto

KANEGON'S CHANGE MACHINE



A unique dinosaur-shaped change machine. Users can put ¥1,000 bills or ¥500 coins into its mouth to make change for ¥100 coins. There is also a button for sound effects. Scheduled for June.

Axis



HARENCHI GAKUEN

Characters from the "Harenchi Gakuen" cartoon are back as stuffed toy prizes for crane games. Six characters in all. Displayed by Data East.

Axis

YAMAGUCHI ROKUHEITA

Data East presented Axis's new line-up of stuffed dolls for crane games, which consist of cartoon characters currently appearing in a popular comic book series. Price and release date not available at press time.



SNK

THE CHICAGO CONNECTION

Animals make their appearance in this set of stuffed dolls from SNK. They include gorillas, bulldogs, and alligators. They've been outfitted to resemble gangsters of the 1930s.



Axis

OJAMANGA YAMADA KUN

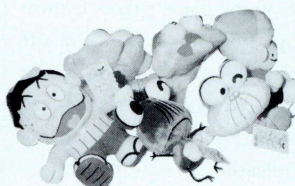
A complete line of stuffed prizes based on popular cartoon "Oja Manga Yamada Kun." Seven characters in all. Displayed by Data East.



SNK

MORETSU ATARO

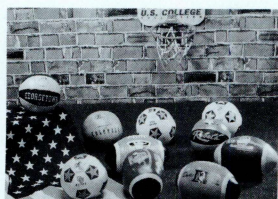
A stuffed toy set based on six characters from comic book "Moretsu Ataro." Manufactured by Takara. Release date not available at press time.



Amuse

U.S. COLLEGE BALL SET

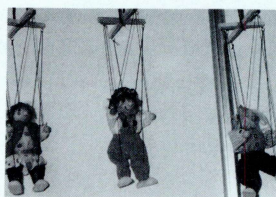
These mini ball prizes, including footballs and soccer balls, feature a U.S. collegiate-life design scheme. Licensed by The U.S. College Collection.



El Sol Import's

AYATSURI NINGYO

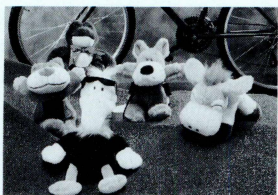
These are clown puppet prizes with a comical touch. 11 kinds are available in all. Now on sale.



Amuse

RIN RIN! TOURING POUCH

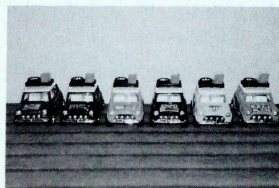
A set of animal stuffed toys comes with rubber band so that they can be attached to arms and bikes. Five kinds in all. Size: 18 to 20-cm in total length.



El Sol Import's

SUPER MINI COUPE, SUPER MINI WAGON

New additions to the company's popular European miniature car series. This set is smaller. Now on sale.



Amuse

BIG HEISEI TENSAI BAKABON

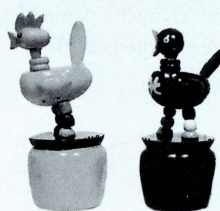
Amuse presented a line-up of stuffed dolls featuring characters from the popular cartoon "Heisei Tensai Bakabon." The sizes are all larger than other stuffed toy prizes.



El Sol Import's

DANCING BIRD

The company featured a line-up of old-fashioned wooden bird-shaped toy prizes. Six kinds in all. Now on sale.



SNK

FATAL FURY GLOVE

SNK presented a line-up of gloves with the logo of *Fatal Fury Special*. Available in three colors. Price and release date not available at press time.



System Service

YUYUHAKUSHO WATCH

System Service presented a line-up of four kinds of watches based on the characters from popular cartoon Yu Yu Hakusho. Scheduled for mid-May release.



System Service

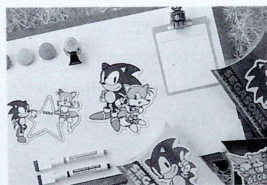
MANMACHAN ODEKAKE SET



The second series of prizes based on a popular TV program. This time, four kinds of products are available, including caps, sun visors, bags, and purses.

Sega Enterprises

SEGASONIC MAGNET STICKER



Stickers based on Sonic and Tails characters from Segasonic the Hedgehog. Magnetized, they can be stuck on or torn off any number of times. Comes in a package.

System Service

STUFFED TOYS & MESSAGE BOARDS



These crane game prizes feature message boards saying "I'm off today," "Here is a non-smoking section," and so on. Five kinds are available. Scheduled for mid-April release.

Sega Enterprises

TAKYUBIN MASCOT



A complete line of animal stuffed toys based on well-known Japanese parcel delivery companies. Each toy wears a hat on which the company's name is written. Scheduled for April release.

Scratch

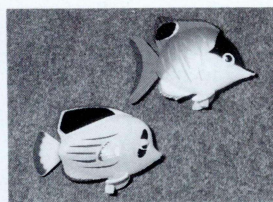
WAKARETE PON!



Cute animal stuffed toys divided into face parts and the bottom parts were released by Scratch Corp. A rubber sucker is attached to each part. Five different varieties are available.

Central

TROPICAL FISH



Colorful tropical fish-shaped prizes. Each comes equipped with a spring, which, if wound, makes its tail fin lash. Two kinds are available. Now on sale.

Scratch

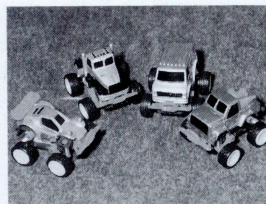
GOINKYOTACHI NO HINATABOKKO



Stuffed toys released include a set of animals, including elephants, lions, zebras and so on. They all sit squarely on floor cushions. Now on sale.

Central

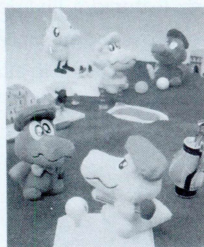
4WD FULL PACK



Central presented miniature prizes featuring 4WD cars. Four kinds are available including a van, a truck, and so on. One set carries 100 units.

Scratch

EAGLE TOM



These stuffed toys are based on an alligator character named Eagle Tom. Five variations in all.

Central

PANORAMA



A focus-free, panoramic camera that uses 35mm film. Available in three colors including red, black, and yellow. Now on sale.

Sega Enterprises

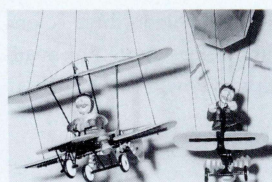
UCHAN NANCHAN IN BIRELEY'S



Stuffed toys based on the popular Japanese comedy duo Uchan and Nanchan. They come with a cup of ice cream, and can be used as a pen stand. A set contains 100 units.

Tiger Amusement

FLYING MACHINE



Tiger Amusement presented a line-up of ornamental planes for interior decorations. They are made of either metal or fiber, and modeled after planes of days gone by.

Takara Amusement

RAMEN CHIME

It is a life-sized prize based on cup noodles as its motif. It has built-in monitor to measure three minutes' cooking time. Unique sounds are heard once time is up. Four kinds in all. On sale in July.



Miyuki Industiar

KEWPIE CHAN KH

The well-known Kewpie doll is back as a prize key holder. She embraces a little heart-shaped stuff. Now on sale.



Takara Amusement

KOBO CHAN

Six members of the popular comic "Kobo chan" family make their appearance in this set of stuffed dolls. They include father, mother, grandpa, and so on. Scheduled for June release.



Miyuki Industiar

BAG WITH WATCH

The company presented a line-up of colorful pouches, each containing a digital watch. One case holds 120 units. Now on sale.



**Takara Amusement/
Parker Brothers**

THE GAME OF LIFE

Items used in *The Game of Life*, are back as prizes. One set carries 100 such items as miniature boards, pieces and roulettes. Scheduled for July release.



Miyuki Industiar

CRYSTAL SET

Fashionable rings are now available as prizes. Comes with a transparent case. Now on sale.



Mattel

ALADDIN

Miniature doll prizes based on Disney's hit movie "Aladdin" characters. One case carries 102 units. Displayed by Able Corporation and K-mic Japan.



K-Mic Japan

CITROEN

"Citroen" version is newly added to the company's popular car prize series. One set carries 144 units. Now on sale.



Mattel SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARVES

Miniature toy prizes based on the popular Disney characters Snow White and Seven Dwarves. One case carries 104 units. Displayed by Able Corporation and K-mic Japan.



Mattel MICKEY MOUSE AND HIS FRIENDS

Miniature dolls for prizes featuring popular characters from Disney. Displayed by Able Corporation.



Kato Manufacturing

PROGRESSIVE SYSTEM

This is the dedicated option system for the company's slot machines *Ms Venus* and *Ms Patra*. It can control the number of tokens they dispense, and adjust the reimbursement ratio.



Kyugo Trading

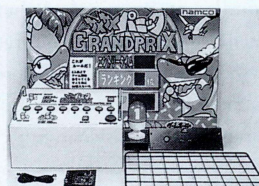


By attaching this to any game machine, this new system can calculate the number of coins customers insert. Then, the number is displayed and printed out. Price and release date not available at press time.

GAMS

Namco

SHARK BASHING GRAND PRIX



Dedicated kits to link 2-to-8 machines of the company's whacking game *Shark Bashing Grand Prix*. Two modes are available based on either total score or time limit as set by the main controller.

Kinki Cresco/ Virtual Baseball



VIRTUAL BASEBALL

A full-scale batting machine with a screen on which a LD-based pitcher's image is projected. The pitching speed can be adjusted according to four patterns. Displayed by Marubeni Corp.

Nippo



KENTA KUN

A compact and portable coin collecting and accounting system. Data is fed directly to a computer, ensuring accuracy. For display only.

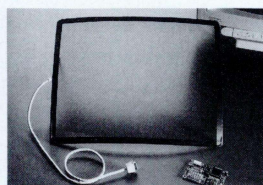
Sigma



LOTUS 5 WAY

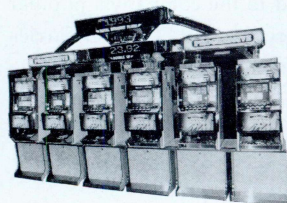
Sigma has developed its own "Progressive System" that can set eight kinds of targets' line-up for a jackpot. Price and release date not available.

Microtouch Systems HYPER TOUCH CT-100



A touch sensor that incorporates the high-resolution analog-based electrostatic volume system. Technology used should make for higher definition and durability.

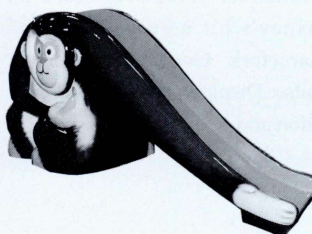
Sega Enterprises



PROGRESSIVE

A multi system that offers more exciting game play by connecting several units of a poker-style token game. With this, all tokens deposited in each machine are paid out to a player who goes into a "Royal Flush" mode first.

Mass-set



TENAGAZARU (proposed)

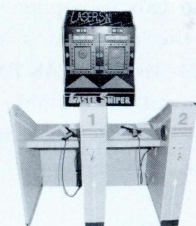
The newest ride in the company's animal series following the "joy elephant" ride. In this version, the slide is shaped like an ape with long arms. Price and release date not available.

Takara Amusement NEW TAKARA MULTI STATION



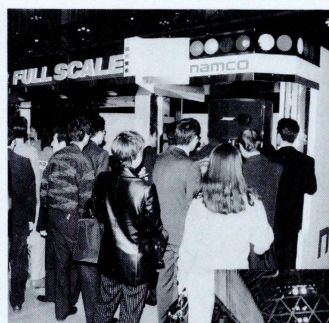
This rotating stage has a diameter of 4.8 m, with ample room to load several game cabinets. The lights, sound, and movements should add spice to any location. Rotating speed can be adjusted.

Togo



LASER SNIPER TWIN

Dedicated kits for refitting the laser shooting game "Laser Sniper" With them, this game can be finished with a more eye-catching design. On display only.



ACME '94



ACME'94 took place this past March 17-19 at the Rosemont Convention Center just outside of Chicago, Illinois. Run by the AAMA and Play Meter magazine, the show brought together 256 exhibitors and 8,378 visitors. There was a clear star of the show and a handful of other products that drew attention, but for the most part operators and distributors expressed their disappointment with the video game offerings on display. Virtual reality manufacturers were nowhere to be seen, except for one full-motion simulator, and a rethink about their coin-op product lines is no doubt underway. On the other hand, customers seeking redemption goods found themselves with a very full plate.

*Text by Carl Freire
Photos by Carl Freire and Eric Johnston*

**March 17-19
Rosemont
Convention
Center
Illinois, U.S.A.**



The star of the show: Sega's Daytona USA.



The Chicagoland area saw the return of the American Coin Machine Exposition this past March 17th to 19th when the show was held at the Rosemont Convention Center near Chicago O'Hare International Airport. The first day of the expo coincided with St. Patrick's Day, a holiday that has taken a life of its own in the United States with much partying going on by the descendants of Irish and non-Irish alike. Many visitors and exhibitors felt that attendance was somewhat lower than usual for a first day, and a few speculated that the holiday had something to do with it. Perhaps the holiday set a precedent, as attendance was down slightly off last year's mark of 8,586, dropping to 8,378.

The general consensus on the part of the economic establishment is that the U.S. has dragged its way out of recession. That may be so, but the American amusement industry seems to be standing on somewhat unsteady feet, at least on the operations side of things. As is the case in Japan and around Europe, the smaller operators have been suffering, hoping for the next big inexpensive kit. However, such equipment has not been forthcoming in large numbers from the major manufacturers. The star of this year's ACME, for example, was Sega's new *Daytona USA*. Everybody was talking about it and lining up to look at it. However, they were also talking about the price.

While it's not accurate to say that video game manufacturers are turning away from inexpensive PCB games, it is accurate to say that two of the most prominent Japanese companies — Sega and Namco — are concentrating their manufacturing efforts on larger, high-end equipment. One should also remember that California's Atari has likewise turned out a large quantity of dedicated cockpit and upright pieces, although at a Distributors' Breakfast meeting held on the 17th, company officials did indicate that "more games for the street" would soon be on the way. And, of course, there were companies at ACME with PCB-based games on the market, including Jaleco, Data East, SNK, Capcom, Kaneko, as well as the kit

version of *Mortal Kombat II* from Williams and the new *Nebulasray* from Namco. Finally, despite the concerns about price schedules, most of the visitors and exhibitors queried were upbeat both about the show itself and the prospects for the coming year.

The "hit" syndrome.

From the point of view of the manufacturers, 1993 was the year of the "hit syndrome." Games either had to become hits fairly quickly or else they disappeared from sight. Perhaps the success of such mega-hits as *Street Fighter II*, *Mortal Kombat*, and *NBA Jam* had affected people's perceptions of the state of the video game market, with products that should have been measured against lower standards finding themselves with the uphill battle to become the equals of those star pieces. Some might also suggest that the arcade market also lost out to the consumer business with its plethora of near arcade-quality equipment, although the jury is still out on whether the consumer market operates in synergy with or to the detriment of the arcades.

Virtual reality has been the subject of much attention (and hype) over the past year or two. Despite this, no virtual reality companies exhibited at the show, and only one firm — I.C.E. Associates — had full-motion simulators on hand. There were two factors at play. First of all, the equipment is still too expensive for most arcade markets. In addition, one has to remember that these products are physically large. As one attendee pointed out, "You can't expect your average bar owner-operator to jam one of these units in front of his bar counter. For one thing, where are his customers going to stand?" Finally, the wave of media publicity surrounding such equipment — the pinnacle in the U.S. being a cover article in *Time* magazine — perhaps created greater expectations for VR equipment than the medium is currently capable of fulfilling. A number of exhibitors stated their belief that the VR industry would concentrate on the amusement market for the time being, with coin-op being moved to the back burner.

As noted earlier, the redemption market continues to thrive in the U.S. and is expected to grow even further this year. If *Daytona USA* was tops on the "most talked about" list at ACME, redemption ran a close second. In addition to the aforementioned offerings from Japanese companies, all of the major U.S. redemption manufacturers were present in force. The show catalogue lists a total of 55 companies as exhibitors of redemption equipment. Most predicted another hot year for the genre in the U.S., and the number of participants in this sector is likely to increase.

Although the pinball market seems to be in the peak phase of its cycle, the three pinball manufacturers currently active all had new products on hand. Data East's Tommy made its U.S. debut, while Williams unveiled *World Cup Soccer* and *Demolition Man*. Premier Technology/Gottlieb seemed to be the big winner in this category, however, with many a show visitor talking about the helicopter in the company's new *Rescue 911* pinball game. Over at Capcom, plans continue apace for the opening of that firm's new subsidiary Gamestar. Joseph Morici, Senior Vice President of Sales & Marketing for Capcom, said that a manufacturing facility has been purchased in Chicago and the hiring of personnel is going smoothly. He also said that Gamestar's first products will likely be redemption pieces, rather than pinball games, owing to the "current crowding in the pinball market." Many people have said that the pinball market around the world is saturated. However, Roger Sharpe, Williams' Marketing Support Services Director, offered a different point of view. "Most operators that had pinball in the 1970s would have two or three tables at a single site," he said. "In the 1980s, that went down to one, and now they think the business won't support an extra machine."



Lining up for Rescue 911.

Seminars and summits.

A number of events were held in conjunction with ACME. As always, the AAMA ran a full roster of seminars covering topics ranging from an information session on the North American Free Trade Agreement to advertising and promotions to operating family entertainment centers. In addition, a summit meeting was held on Friday the 18th between representatives of the U.S. organizations AMOA and AAMA, Japan's JAMMA, Britain's BACTA, and other invitees. Although the meeting was closed to the press, JAM was told later that topics discussed included getting more information out about the Underwriters' Laboratory to would-be importers to the U.S., cross-promotion of upcoming shows, and a status report on the anti-counterfeiting campaign.



Participants of the summit meeting. Back row (1 to r): Shunji Iki, Robert Fay, Frank Ballouz, Paul Mordica. Front row (1 to r): Masaya Nakamura, Steve Koenigsberg, Eduardo Morales, Roger Withers.



The Williams crew accepting one of their Sales Achievement awards.

Finally, no show would be complete without awards ceremonies. AAMA held its annual appreciation dinner on the 18th, with this year's honoree being Steve Lieberman of Minnesota's Lieberman Music Co. Meanwhile, at the All-Show Cocktail Party held the day before, awards were passed out for Sales Achievements over 1993. Chicago's Williams/Bally/Midway ruled the roost, coming away with four diamond awards (the top) in video games, and two diamond and four platinum for pinball games. Other diamond awards went to SNK (one for video) and Data East (one for pinball). Platinum went to Sega (one for video), Data East (two for pinball), and Lazer-Tron (one for redemption), while golds were given to Strata and Sega (one each for video), Premier Technology (one for pinball), Data East (one each for pinball and redemption), and Bromley Inc. (one for redemption). Finally, silver prize winners included American Laser Games (two for video) and Premier (one for pinball).

Aerosmith and texture-mapping stars.

This being the U.S. amusement manufacturers' premiere showcase, it came as no surprise that Williams/Bally/Midway had one of the largest booths at the show, nor that it was located near the main entrance. Reflecting the company's manufacturing concerns, about half of the area was taken up by pinball and half by video games. The booth was rounded out with a few redemption and carnival-style pieces. On the pinball side, the display was

ACME

devoted to Williams' aforementioned new tables, *World Cup Soccer* and *Demolition Man*, based on the Sylvester Stallone movie. With the World Cup coming up this summer, Williams is hoping the great response the event is getting (at the time of writing, all of the games were either sold out or nearly so) will have an equal effect on that table. Past the pinball tables, the company ushered in two new redemption games, *Addams Family Family Values* and *Flying Saucer*, another product from H.A.R. Enterprises, the makers of *Double Cheese*. The *Addams Family* license in particular received a good deal of attention.

As for video games, the company ushered in a new kit version of *Mortal Kombat II*, the *NBA Jam: Tournament Edition* in its American debut, and a new shooting game that was the focal point of their display, *Revolution X*. This game, developed by the same design team that worked on the T2 project, features digitized graphics and a soundtrack by the rock band Aerosmith. There were a handful of shooting games at the show, and of the lot, this one was probably the most talked about, if only for the tie-up with the band. Mr. Sharpe said 1993 had been "a great year" for the company, as evidenced by the sales awards Williams received at the show.

Next door to Williams stood the company that is arguably king of the Japanese commercial market, Sega. The main attraction at Sega's booth was, of course, *Daytona USA*, with three units standing at the front of it facing the entrance. People crowded around the machines, checking out the texture-mapped graphics. Perhaps the comment that best typified the response to the game came in one word: "Wow!" Of course, Sega's booth had more to it than just this showcase attraction. *Virtua Fighter* featured prominently in the display in both big screen and upright cabinet versions. Finishing out the booth were *Star Wars*, featuring the same Model 1 graphics board that drives the two *Virtua* games, and *Jurassic Park*, plus a Sonic the Hedgehog-based redemption piece.

Taito's booth lay beyond the Williams stand. The biggest attention-getter at this display was another of the shooting games at the show, *Under Fire*. The digitized graphics and unusual guns (for this kind of game) caught the eyes of passersby. Taito has been increasing its emphasis in the U.S. market on novelty and redemption games. According to Anita Platadis of Taito America's sales division, the company's newest redemption product *Jungle Zookeeper* was the biggest attraction. This game was designed and developed in the U.S. *Lucky Carnival*, another novelty game, also continues to perform well.

The next booth over from Sega's was Konami's, home to ACME gun game number three, *Lethal Enforcers 2: Gun Fighters*. If *Revolution X* was the most talked about game, then *LE2* was said to be, according



Aerosmith: talkin' about a Revolution X.

Crowding around to see the action.



Made in America: Jungle Zookeeper.

to Konami America's Michael Kubin, Director of Sales & Marketing, "the best gun game at the show." The new version moves players out of the city and into the Wild West. Other products at the booth included the basketball game *Run and Gun* and their new driving game *Racin' Force*. Up the aisle from Konami stood the Jaleco booth. The star of this booth was *Junior Grand Prix Star II*, a kid-sized version of the company's popular racing game. Other new attractions here included the hand-to-hand combat game *Battle K-Road* and the pugilists' *Best Bout Boxing*. *Alien Command* was also on hand in a redesigned cabinet, and *Arm Champs II* rounded out the booth.

Next in line after Konami was Data East. The main focus here was on the company's latest offering from the pinball division, *Tommy*. During the course of the show, Data East also received word that Capcom's request for an injunction against sales of



Konami Chairman Kagemasa Kozuki (r) and Konami America President Kenji Hiraoka flank their new Lethal Enforcers 2: Gun Fighters.

Fighters' History had been rejected by a San Francisco Federal District Court judge [See ITJ.-Ed.]. Data East celebrated by displaying it at their booth. Other exhibited products included the new *Windjammers* vid, and a roster of novelty-redemption products either developed or distributed by the firm, including *Carousel*, *Hop-a-tic-tac-toe*, and *Wacky Gator* (the latter game, from Namco, was the source of Data East's redemption game sales achievement award).

Fighters' History is available for the NEO*GEO system, which also won a sales award. The system's proprietor, SNK, had a large booth located near the passageway connecting the center to the Hyatt hotel. A variety of NEO*GEO items were on hand, with the hand-to-hand combat game *Samurai Shodown* and the soccer title *Super Sidekicks 2* generating the most interest. SNK also had a prototype version of the consumer market NEO Deck on display. National Sales Manager Tracy Tate said the company was planning to target the hotel market and similar venues for the product. Continuing up the aisle to the back of the hall brought one to the American Laser Games booth. On display here were ALG's latest games, *The Last Bounty Hunter* and *Shootout at Old Tucson*.

The Atari booth was dedicated largely to the company's newest product, the texture-mapped graphics game *T-Mek*. Up to six units may be linked together for six-player tank-to-tank action. Atari also announced at their distributor breakfast that two more products — *Metal Maniax*, a smash-up derby game, and *Primal Rage*, dino-to-dino combat — were due out over the next six months, with seven more in the pipe for the next twelve. Jeff Holmes from Time-Warner, Atari's majority stockholder, also announced that Tengen, Atari's consumer market software house, and Time-Warner Interactive would both be merged into Atari as part of a corporate restructuring project.

Chun-Li, helicopters, and Godzilla.

At the Capcom stand, the main object of attention was *Super Street Fighter II Turbo*, a game with the features Capcom's Mr. Morici said the players and operators in the U.S. had wanted instead of the release's predecessor. Despite its longevity in the marketplace, Mr. Morici said the game had been very well-received as "the best-priced street piece at the show." Also making its U.S. debut was *Dungeons & Dragons: Tower of Doom*, which also generated positive comments. Rounding out the booth were two test units of a new video game *Eco Fighters* and a handful of Instant Memories photo booths.

Premier Technology had a long booth that stretched out from the main entrance. Their new pinball prod-



Maximum R & B?



The NEO-GEO System highlighted the SNK stand.



Atari had special security for their booth...



... as did Capcom.

uct, *Rescue 911* (loosely based on a popular U.S. television program), was probably that genre's most-talked about item at the show. Special games features include a rescue helicopter that released balls into the action. Meanwhile, the Romstar booth's array reflected that company's close relationship with Capcom. Video game products on display included the company's three new pieces. Romstar also had a pachinko-esque redemption game called *Goofy Hoops* that attracted its share of favorable notices.

The up-and-coming video game manufacturer Strata Group had the booth adjacent to Romstar's. Their display was divided equally between the company's texture-mapped graphics driving game *Driver's Edge* and their



new fighting game *Blood Storm*, a product reminiscent of the company's hit *Time Killers*. Kaneko's booth stood next to Strata's. The centerpiece of this display was the hand-to-hand combat game *Blood Warriors*. Other products rounding out the booth included *Gals Panic II* and the kiddie redemption video game *Bonks Adventure*. Down the aisle from these companies stood American Sammy. Although the company had been active in video games for a while, it now seems to be returning to its original emphasis on novelty attractions. Their latest offerings in the genre included a skill-type game called *Coin Circus*, and a revamped version of last year's *Simple Simon* called *Magic Dr. X*. *Coin Circus* in particular caught the eyes of many passersby.

Last but certainly not least was the Namco booth. It and the Williams' booth were the two largest of the show. Visitors to the stand were greeted by a special star there to promote a game using his likeness. Yes, Godzilla was on hand to watch over the new redemption game *Godzilla Wars*. The booth itself was divided into approximately three zones, each dedicated to a different game. First up was the company's driving game *Ridge Racer* in the triple monitor and deluxe versions. Next came a bank of *Suzuka 8 Hours 2* machines and a quartet of *Nebulasray* machines. Finally, the booth was rounded out with *Galaxian 3*, *Cyber Sled*, and *Shoot Away II Rapid Fire* all in a row. As for redemption attractions, in addition to *Godzilla*, the company also had *Shark Bashing Grand Prix*. *Ridge Racers* was probably the piece that got the most attention (next to the radioactive lizard), although the booth as a whole remained fairly active throughout the show in spite of its less than ideal location.

Redemption City

As noted earlier, redemption-related products were present in great abundance, and attracted a good deal of attention. One corner of the expo hall was devoted to a representation of an ideal family entertainment center, dubbed Redemption City. Dedicated redemption hardware manufacturers were largely concentrated in the center of the exhibition space, though a few could be found around the fringes. One of these companies was Smart Industries, whose booth lay beyond Taito's towards the front of the hall. Here, one could find such ball-tossing games as *Killer T-Rex* and *Feed Big Bertha*, as well as the company's signature product, *Smart Ball*. A new item on display was the Smart Redemption Center, a prize dispenser based on a food vending machine. Customers simply insert the tickets they have won into the machine. It then calculates the total number of points, and allows them to "buy" products of up to that value, freeing arcade staff from those duties. A few aisles over one could find the Innovative Concepts in Entertainment booth. Here, passersby stopped to check out the update release *Full Court Frenzy II Basketball*, and such standbys as *Hungry Hungry Hippo*.



Doin' the Goofy Hoops with Romstar.



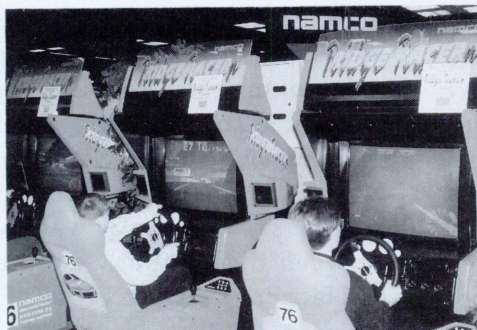
Skee-Ball hit the jackpot.



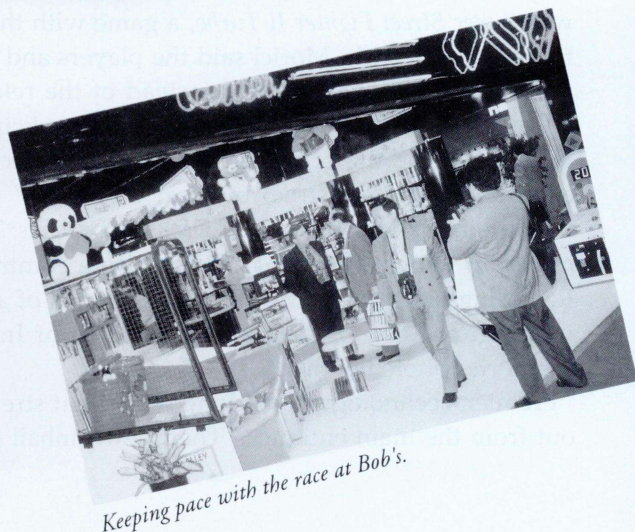
Sorry, no Cokes available.



Getting an edge with Strata.



Driving the point home at the Namco booth.



Keeping pace with the race at Bob's.

The many faces of ACME.



Another long-time player in the novelty and redemption equipment business is Skee-Ball. At ACME, this company highlighted an updated version of Tic-Tac-Toe, as well as *Merlin's Mirror*, a children's game. In addition, *Skee Ball*, the company's mainstay, had been modified to include a progressive jackpot function. Across the aisle from Skee-Ball was Bob's Space Racers. Bob's exhibit featured a breadth of products from the company catalogue, including their lineup of kiddie games. These included *Kiddie Whac-*



Mother Goose lives at the Doyle booth.



Mark Twain would have appreciated Ribbit Racing.



Nancy Singh shows off Purple Star's Strike Zone.



a-Mole and *Kiddie Can Alley*, scaled-down versions of their adult-sized games. Other equipment included the standard editions of those and other games such as *Sidewinder*, as well as a wealth of prize offerings.

Next up was the Doyle International booth. According to Marketing/Sales Director Jerry Weiman, the hot product here was the Children's Story Book series of games. The booth also featured the Doyle standard *Dump The Ump*, as well as *Shark Frenzy* and *Hoop Shot Rally*. A few aisles over stood the booth of relative newcomer Purple Star, relative because most of the people working there have long experience in the industry. The featured attraction here was the pitching game *Strike Zone*. In addition to the sales at the show, President Nancy Singh also said that the company was having great success in getting their *Catch The Rainbow* product into non-redemption markets.

Lazer-Tron had a booth across the way from Purple Star's. The company's new *Ribbit Racing*, a two-player button-whacker race game, got the most attention, according to Vice President of Marketing Matt Kelly. There were two other new products on display besides the amphibian exercise, the baseball-themed *Wild Thing* and the roll-down *Shake, Rattle & Roll*. The booth was rounded out by the company's hit game *Spin To Win*, *After Shock*, and *Awesome Toss 'Em*. Finally, at the back of the hall near the Redemption City zone stood the National Sports Game booth. Customers clustered around the company's popular *Super Shot Basketball*. Other attractions included *Pitch Hitter* and the American football-based *UB-QB*.

Upbeat mood despite uncertainties.

All in all, the mood at the show was upbeat, and people felt they were looking on another good year. However, it was also clear that the industry would be experiencing some significant changes over the coming year. One change will be an evolutionary one. With the continued growth of the redemption market, most manufacturers in that sector expect competition to increase, as more and more companies try to get in on the action. With the possible release of redemption



employee at the video company to run down to the storeroom, pull the video, and then load it into the machine. Another test scheduled for this past March involving an

products from Capcom's Gamestar, SNK is the only major Japanese manufacturer with no plans to enter that market (Konami has a game out on test at the time of writing). And, of course, the number of U.S. manufacturers is expected to go up. The question is, why have redemption games and FECs become so hot? Ms. Singh of Purple Star offered an interesting explanation. "People are becoming very concerned about the state of the family in the U.S. these days," she said. "I think one reason why they [FECs] are so popular is that they give people the opportunity to do something together as a family."

Meanwhile, a number of other issues face the video game industry. First, there is the perennial question of game violence. Although the U.S. Congress is threatening to create its own rating system and accompanying regulations on games, most manufacturers' representatives questioned believed that the AAMA committee studying the topic would create a ratings board to govern the industry from within. Whether violence in games will actually drop remains to be seen. SNK was the only manufacturer we spoke to who clearly stated that they would put no explicit gore into their games. And, perhaps significantly, one of American Laser Games' new products used digitized images, rather than the live-action footage they typically use.

Another interesting technological development was the announcement made by the operator's group AMOA that it would be involved in the creation of an interactive gaming network [See this month's International Trade Journal.-Ed.]. Such a network would allow players in different locations — from across town to across the country — to compete with one another. Mr. Tate of SNK, echoing the AMOA's position, said that such a network would offer great possibilities for tournaments at a variety of levels, from regional to national. His view that such a network has great potential was shared by many at the show.

The biggest difficulty lies in getting it right, and the burden for this rests on the technology. There have been a number of experiments with interactive television, video-on-demand, and so forth in the U.S. to date, and the results have not been promising. One Colorado test involved customers selecting a video on their home terminal, and then having to wait for an

interactive TV system in Florida using Silicon Graphics hardware was postponed until later this year. The reason? According to *Business Week*, they made the system work for only a limited number of households by using a computer several times more powerful than the one slated to be in place when the system is in operation. Whether or not a large-scale network of interactive arcades is viable at this point in time is definitely up in the air. And, as David Bishop, Vice-President of Namco Operations, pointed out, "Players go to arcades with their friends, and they enjoy interacting with each other. Playing games isn't the only thing they do. They talk about the games, share strategies, and watch each other play. Going to an arcade is a social entertainment."

On a slightly sour note, no AMOA officials were in attendance at ACME. This was reportedly due to a board meeting that conflicted with the dates and times of the trade show. At the summit meeting press conference, AAMA officials said they hoped to work more closely together with their AMOA counterparts to avoid such scheduling difficulties in the future. One can only wonder if Euromat will find itself serving as a clearing house for the dates of board meetings as well as trade shows in the future.

As for ACME '95, unless some unforeseen shift occurs, it is likely that the quantity of redemption equipment will again increase. Likewise, the number of high-end video games will also rise. The question is who will bring up the low end. Rumors were floating around the show that some smaller video game companies were at a make-or-break point, and Konami's Mr. Kubin speculated that the coming year would see some players drop out of the business. With regards to the pinball sector, Mr. Sharpe's comments notwithstanding, people are of the belief that the market is saturated. The recent withdrawal of Alvin G. & Co. from the business and a Gamestar that might be working on redemption instead of pinball would seem to bear this view out. And yet, somehow, despite these threads of pessimism, attendees were in a good mood and looking forward to getting on with business. With any luck, the optimistic mood of ACME will overcome the shadows and uncertainties on the horizon and result in an equally positive 1994. ■

HOTELEX SHANGHAI '94



March 24~27
Shanghai, P.R.C.

by Eric Johnston

Throughout the past two and a half years, JAM has attended coin-op trade shows in Europe, America, and Japan. Virtually all of these shows centered around coin-op products in established markets. In the past decade, the coin-op amusement industry has greatly expanded, and this has meant the opening up of new markets in Eastern Europe, South America, and now the biggest of the all: China.

There are already a number of coin-op manufacturers from around the world who are doing business in the Middle Kingdom. Most everyone recognizes the staggering

potential, but the obstacles, financial, social, and cultural, are equally as daunting. In America, it has been the AAMA which has taken up the challenge of introducing American games to China, having exhibited in Beijing a few months ago. On March 24-27, members of the AAMA were on hand in Shanghai, taking part in an exhibition known as Hotelex, Foodex and Leisure Shanghai '94 (Hotelex Shanghai '94). JAM traveled to China as well, to learn firsthand what was happening in what many people claim is currently the world's most dynamic city.

The Fast Plane to Shanghai

For those members of the AAMA who have been increasing their presence in Asia of late, March will no doubt be remembered as a particularly tiring month. From March 17-19th, the ACME show, which is co-sponsored by the AAMA, took place in Rosemont, Illinois, a stone's throw from O'Hare airport. A mere four days later, an AAMA contingent arrived in Shanghai to take part in Hotelex '94, the first time that the trade organization has participated directly in this particular Shanghai trade show. For many Chinese, it also marked the first time such American-made amusements had ever been seen.

A logical question is what were coin-op manufacturers doing at a trade show for the hotel industry? A quick trip to the Hong Qiao Development Zone – one of several "free trade" zones throughout the country where foreign and Chinese businessmen can operate in relative freedom – provides the answer. China, in particular Shanghai, is putting up new buildings right and left, and these free trade zones serve as islands of modern glass and chrome structures in a sea of development. A good number of these new buildings are luxury hotels. Although slowing a bit of late, this business continues to expand, and as hotel operators grow in economic might, the AAMA felt that attending a show for this industry would provide them with exposure to the kinds of customers who would be in the best position to purchase their products and have them seen by the largest number of people.

This venture was, to put it mildly, a bit of risk. At first glance, there may be little reason to be overly concerned about doing business in China. Statistically, all would appear to be good news, and there is no doubt China has come a very long way in a very short time. Shanghai itself is believed to have registered a 24% growth rate last year. Each week brings a rush of media reports about double digit growth, large increases in GNP and GDP, rising levels of personal consumption and commercial investment, and an increase in the level of disposable income – a most

important statistic for those in the service industry. In the 15 years Deng Xiaoping has presided over a more open, market-oriented economy, there is no doubt the bottom-line numbers have been spectacular. According to *The Economist*, citing World Bank statistics, the average GDP per person was \$85 in 1965. In 1991, that figure had increased to \$370, and much of that had come within the previous ten years. Many mainland Chinese, often with the assistance of Hong Kong, Taiwanese, or U.S. investment capital, have become quite wealthy, and many Western economists were forecasting a large rise in the middle class in the 1980s.



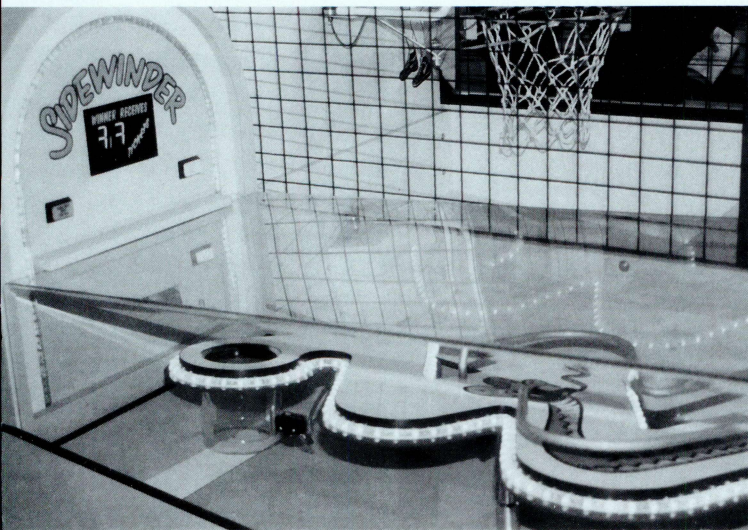
✧ *Dynamo's Air Hockey was one of the more popular games.*

But the high growth, even as it continues today, has brought with it a host of problems that give more experienced businessmen pause for thought. The booming economy has created a brand of raw, unrestrained capitalism that has drawn people from all over the country, and the world, looking to make a quick buck. "It's a feeding frenzy," said one American familiar with the Chinese market. "This must have been what the Wild West was like. No holes barred. Just ruthless competition to get a deal done." This free-for-all atmosphere in cities such as Shanghai and Guangzhou in particular, combined with a large influx of people into the major cities, has created a sense of chaos and confusion, leaving many foreigners and Chinese wondering just how to get things done. The foreign visitor to the free-trade zone must also be familiar with Chinese bargaining strategies, which can trap the unwary, and hard negotiating techniques are often called for, even on an everyday level (This reporter found out the hard way that a "\$5.00 drink" at a nightclub can cost \$6.50 – \$5.00 for the drink and 50¢ each for three ice cubes).

On a personal level, the gap between rich and poor continues to widen. Wages vary greatly, with estimates running between \$30 a month for low-end jobs, to more than \$200 for those working in foreign corporations. The effects of this disparity are apparent to anyone who steps outside of the free trade zones, which are often surrounded by poverty-filled neighborhoods. To make matters worse, inflation has taken

✧ *Executive VP Robert Fay led the AAMA contingent.*





♣ Sidewinder (Bob's Space Racers)

off. Official figures put the inflation rate at somewhere around 8%, but many on the show floor privately insisted it was more like 16%. Combined with rampant political corruption and a sense, as one exhibitor put it, that "nobody knows what tomorrow will bring," it should be quite obvious that there are easier countries to do business in. This is not to imply that the situation is impossible, because whatever the problems, there is a boundless optimism on the part of the Chinese we spoke with that, economically, things are getting better. Despite current political problems between the two countries, there were absolutely no signs of any anti-American feelings on the show floor, as products from U.S. citrus to yogurt from the TCBY yogurt chain drew long lines. "We really like American products," said one girl. "The quality is so much better than China."

Machines from a Beautiful Country

It does take a great deal of planning, getting to know the right people, and a large amount of perseverance on the part of foreign firms who wish to do business in China. In this respect, the AAMA appears to have made all the right moves and deserves congratulations for their diligence and rational approach to the China market. First, they worked closely with the U.S. Commerce Dept., which was one of the sponsors. The organizer of the U.S. Pavilion, the USA/China World Trade Exposition Company, has a large number of contacts within mainland China which it utilized in assisting the AAMA in preparing for the show. The show itself, officially titled the Hotelex, Foodex and Leisure China '94, was hosted by the China Council of International Trade (Shanghai Sub-council), an official government body devoted to promoting foreign trade in Shanghai.

A total of 15 companies from the AAMA were on hand. The showroom spread across two levels of the Shanghai International Exhibition Center. On the first floor, the AAMA had a large booth with the name of the organization written in Chinese and the names of the participating companies written in Chinese and English underneath. It may be of interest to U.S. readers to note that one translation of the Chinese calligraphy for "America" is "Beautiful Country," so that the AAMA becomes (literally) the "Beautiful Country's Organization of Machines for Enjoyment." The English may be a bit stilted, perhaps, but, in Chinese eyes, this must convey a very powerful image.

At this booth were representatives from Doyle International, Skee-Ball, Tecmo Corp., I.C.E., and Dynamo, among others. AAMA Executive Vice-President Robert Fay was on hand as well. "We're here to test the waters and get our name known among those in the Chinese hotel industry," Mr. Fay said at the beginning of the show. "The Chinese market offers a lot of potential to AAMA members. This is the first time we've done this kind of thing, so we're all kind of wondering what will happen." On the second level was a booth with products from a number of other manufacturers including Lazer-Tron, Smart, Jaleco, Fabtek, Coin Concepts, American Laser Games and Bromley's. The majority of the games on display were the carnival-type redemption games, with some video from Jaleco and Fabtek.

The morning of the first day dawned bright and clear as the opening ceremony began at 10:00 a.m. As visitors stood outside the hall, a Chinese military band, whose repertoire of songs included "Jingle Bells," began to play. The doors were then opened, and that's when, in the words of one AAMA exhibitor, "the litmus test came. What would people think of our games?" Almost immediately, it seemed, the AAMA booth was swamped with curious onlookers, some of whom were also serious buyers. Long lines formed almost immediately around two games on the first floor: *Air Hockey* (Dynamo) and *Full Court Frenzy* (I.C.E.). Within an hour, the booth was jammed with people of all ages trying their hand at skill games.



Lazer-Tron's Ron Carrara with Ribbit Racin'

"I really like this game," said one girl of *Full Court Frenzy*. "It's fun, because I can exercise my muscles while I play." "Too difficult," said one young man of Tecmo's *World Cup Soccer '94*. "I wish I knew how to play it, though." Comments on the part of the attendees, many whom had never even seen such games before, tended to be tinged with amazement. Ron Carrara of Lazer-Tron speculated that the reason for the extreme popularity of air hockey tables was their similarity to ping-pong. In general, the more physically interactive the game, the more positive the comments were. Groups of young girls could be seen standing around *Hungry Hungry Hippos* (I.C.E.), waiting their turn to play "because it was fun." Of course, this game is very popular abroad as a redemption piece, and when the girls were told about U.S.-style redemption, they seemed quite surprised. Their advice to those in the industry? "Make the games easier to win lots of tickets!" chimed one girl. "And give away more interesting prizes, like dolls," added her friend. Although it may be some time before U.S.-style redemption is seen in China, it would appear, based on the reaction to products from I.C.E., Doyle, Skee-Ball, and Lazer-Tron, that the market is ripe for development.

An Unprecedented Success

It quickly became obvious to all of the AAMA exhibitors that any fears about the games not being popular were unfounded. Exhibitors found themselves swamped with requests for more information, and interpreters were kept quite busy answering questions. According to the show organizers, 60% to 70% of the games on display were sold by the end of the show, although one exhibitor pointed out that this was due more to the fact that many of the machines had been sold prior to the show than the show itself. "We had meetings with major Taiwanese and Hong Kong distributors before the show," he said. "That's where we did most of our selling."

A random sampling of show attendees revealed a broad range of knowledge about coin-op games. Many people that JAM spoke with had never seen the products on display before, especially the advanced technology products such as video. A few were familiar with home game systems, though, and some had visited arcades before. The games they play normally cost about 1 yuan per play. Many of the buyers who had come shopping for hotel products found themselves attracted to the AAMA booth and inquiring about a variety of pieces. Although some of the products on display were in the \$5,000 range, this is still rather expensive for many. In addition, as Gene Brogowski of I.C.E. Corp. pointed out, even when a



♣ Playing the silver ball.

sale was made, there were unexpected difficulties. "We found out that there were no private trucking companies to come and get the machine out of the hall," he explained. "Finding a truck delivery service is about the last thing you'd have to worry about at trade shows in the U.S. It's been quite a learning experience."

In addition to the above-mentioned products, games seen at the first floor booth included *Skee Ball* (Skee Ball Inc.), *Dump the Ump* (Doyle), *Electronic Darts* (Arachnid), *Tommy* (Data East Pinball), *World Cup Soccer* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (both from Williams). These advanced technology pinball machines from Data East and Williams in particular had people standing around them in awe. "I've seen pinball machines in arcades before, but these machines are much more advanced than anything we have in China," said one young visitor.

In addition to all of the game manufacturers, Rowe was represented with their Rock-n-Roll jukeboxes. Exhibiting through a Hong Kong-based distributor, Rowe is an AAMA member with a good track record in Asia. The company first entered Singapore five years ago, and their distributor now has offices in Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou. "A lot of our Chinese customers are people in the bar and hotel industries," said a spokesman. "This show, therefore, is very good because we can meet a variety of people who are interested in our particular product." Although more than a few attendees were obviously curious onlookers, he emphasized that a lot of people were "here for serious buying."

Up on the second floor, the star attractions were *Space Pirates* (American Laser Games) and *Rabbit Racine* (Lazer-Tron), along with *Killer T Rex* (Smart Industries), *Dino Rally* (Bromley), *Basket Bull* (Jaleco), *Paint 'N Puzzle* (Century Vending) and Arachnid's electronic darts games. Fabtek was also on hand, showing *Raiden II*. Despite the rather inconvenient location, the booth drew a large variety of people, espe-

cially the *Space Pirates* game, which had long lines of young men throughout the first day.

In an interview with JAM, a spokesman from the USA/China World Trade Exposition Company talked about how Hotelex has grown recently. "Two years ago, you practically had to pay people to come to the show," he noted. "We have learned a lot over the past two years, including the fact that the exhibitors want 'trade only' days. Therefore, this year we closed the show to the public on the first two days." Throughout the four day event, between 18,000-20,000 people were expected. The show had been heavily publicized in the local media, and the organizers took care of virtually all arrangements for the exhibitors, including hotel reservations, transportation arrangements, and a host of other related paperwork.

Where to from here?

What is one to make then, of the burgeoning Chinese amusement market? There is no doubt the enthusiasm is there, but, as one member of the Chinese hotel industry commented, a lot depends on just how much freedom the government decides to grant and to what extent they take a "hands off" policy to economic growth. We were told time and time again how much the Chinese economy in general is growing, and a quick glance at the figures (24% growth rate for Shanghai in 1993, according to the U.S. Commerce Dept., with a GNP increase of 14.9%) reveals the truth of these claims. "Shanghai is where it's happening," said one attendee. "Beijing has too many problems because of the central bureaucracy." He boldly predicted that the AAMA would be back next year and take almost 1/3 of the entire hall, but AAMA officials cautioned that it was far too early to make that kind of decision.

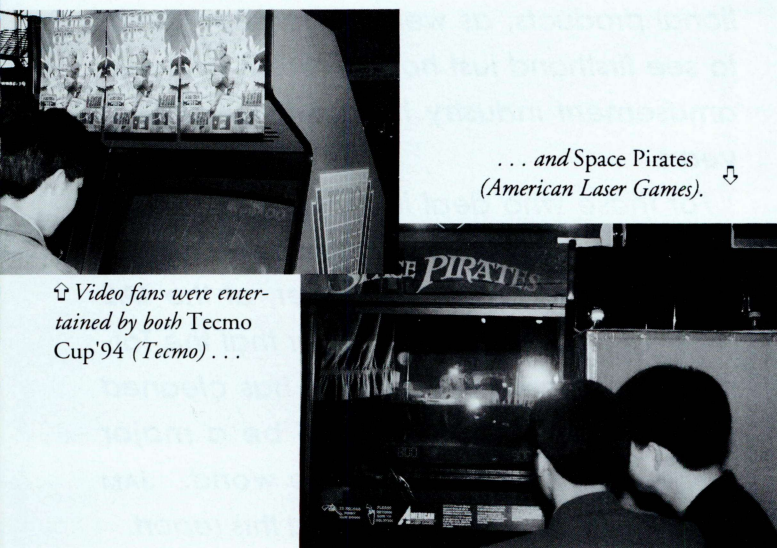
And where were the Japanese? Namco has opened several arcades in Shanghai, and at least one arcade in

the Itoman complex downtown has a good number of Japanese video games, so there is a Japanese presence in China. There are reportedly some problems though. "Those games are too expensive for ordinary Chinese," said one person familiar with the Shanghai coin-op industry. The organizers were quick to assert that they welcomed all members of the international coin-op industry, not only the Americans, and hoped more Japanese would participate in the future. The AAMA has also indicated that it would be interested in doing something with JAMMA in China as well.

Recent reports in *The Economist*, the *Far East Economic Review* and other magazines have painted a dark picture of China's immediate economic future, pointing out that the explosive growth is leaving in its wake a host of economic and social problems that the central government is not equipped to deal with. Then there is the issue of Deng Xiaoping, and what will happen after his death. The organizers of the convention emphasized that "politics is politics and business is business," but however true that may be, it may not be enough to calm worried foreigners (or Chinese), especially if political upheaval should occur following a struggle for succession. "I am very worried about all of this economic development and what will happen after Deng is gone," said one woman.

For the amusement industry, there are some more immediate and pressing issues to be concerned about: finding reliable distributors, learning the complex legal procedures involved in exporting their products, and other such matters are of paramount importance. But even before that, AAMA members have to learn the Chinese system. "This is what we're all here for, to educate ourselves on how to do business in this market," said Skip Doyle. To their credit, the AAMA did a superb job in organizing themselves and coming this far, and demonstrated more than a fair amount of understanding as to the complexities of doing business in China.

By the end of the first day, most attendees had pronounced themselves pleased with the show, and hoped to be back next year, although in what capacity was unclear. Despite a host of concerns, which should not and are not being taken lightly by anyone within the AAMA, there exists a good deal of optimism among those in the U.S. coin-op industry that China, or at least Shanghai, offers much potential. AAMA members are also wise enough to recognize that very often it is those in Taiwan and Hong Kong, including such persons as Entropy's Henry Yeh and Metrotainment's Frank Kuan, who will be the key to succeeding in China, as they have the language skills, personal contacts and experience to get things done. Whatever the future brings, optimism, combined with AAMA's careful, calculated approach and an ability to work well with those in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong will eventually be rewarded. ■



... and Space Pirates
(American Laser Games).

Video fans were entertained by both Tecmo Cup '94 (Tecmo)...



TAE '94

Taipei, R.O.C.

March 24-28

by Eric Johnston



The 1994 Taiwan Amusement Exhibition (TAE) marked only the third show its kind, the first one having occurred in the spring of 1993. Held in the CETRA exhibition center, located next to Sungshan Domestic Airport in the heart of Taipei, the 1994 show offered visitors a host of local and international products, as well as the opportunity to see firsthand just how far the Taiwanese amusement industry has come in recent years.

For those who deal in video games, Taiwan used to (and for many still does) mean copyboards. However, at the TAE show at least, it would appear that the Taiwanese amusement industry has cleaned itself up and now stands to be a major player within Asia, if not the world. JAM stopped by the show and filed this report.

A New Revolution

For all of the publicity about Taiwan's intellectual property right violations, especially in the realm of video games, the fact remains that this island of 20 million people is now Asia's second largest market for coin-op amusements, behind only Japan. This is all the more remarkable given that the Taiwanese coin-op industry itself has only been in existence for around 20 years. It has, at times, been a very trying existence. The government's position vis-a-vis the coin-op industry has vacillated between quiet tolerance and loud opposition, depending on which way the political winds were blowing and the conduct of the industry itself, which has unfortunately, like that in too many other countries, often been less than exemplary.

But over the past several years, with increased pressure from the those in international coin-op industry, Taiwan has begun to clean up its act. Unlike the Enada show in Italy, where copied games have often been openly displayed, TAE show officials have gone out of their way to ensure that only legitimate products were offered by exhibiting manufacturers and distributors. Although many in other countries may remain skeptical, the fact is that the Taiwanese industry has realized it must change, and Taiwan's industry leaders have seen that international opinion, or at least Japanese and American opinion, has been quite negative because of the country's reputation as a "copy kingdom." This kind of news gets a lot of press, but what is not often reported are the difficulties involved in doing business in Taiwan.

Because of the current legal structure, amusement operators in Taiwan face a number of obstacles when they attempt to establish new locations. Liu Chan-luen, who is, according to TAE organizers, an expert on amusement industry-related issues, points out that there are tough restrictions on opening an amusement center. First, an operator must select a site that is outside residential and other "restricted" areas. Such locations must also be more than 50 meters from hospitals and schools. Coin-op machines are not allowed to be placed outside the establishment (a very common practice with crane games in Japan). Of course, the location must comply with regulations set by the Office of Building Standards. Finally, the building itself must have at least eight parking spaces adjacent to it (not across the street). What this means is that, in practice, department stores are often about the only places where arcades can be legally set up, and it is in Taipei's larger department stores where some of the more upscale arcades will be noticed.



Doing Business as an Operator

Once an operator has selected a location that fulfills all government requirements, they must then submit relevant documents and register their business with the government. Mr. Liu said that the registration procedure varies based on what type of organization is to be registered. For example, if an operator wishes to run a location as an independent arcade, he or she must register in accordance with the Business Registration Law. This means that the relevant person must submit an application form and some form of identification. If they wish to operate as a company, they must follow the Corporation Law. Very often, those who register under this law will have partners, and in this case, identification for each person and a partnership contract must also be submitted. If the business is capitalized at more than NT\$250,000 (\$10,000), a Statement of Capital is required. If the business is capitalized at more than NT\$500,000, (\$20,000) a financial statement signed by a CPA is also required.

Despite such restrictions, the amusement industry in Taiwan continues to grow. In the realm of high-tech games, larger, more expensive pieces are now being seen, at least at the amusement shows. At this year's show, Japanese high-tech products occupied over half of the entire hall. Most of the major Japanese manufacturers exhibited through their Taiwanese distributors, although Konami had their own booth. This company has been on the move in Asia recently. Prior to the start of the show, they opened up a



branch office in Taipei. According to Naomi Nishi of Konami's International Sales Dept., the new branch office will be involved in sales and manufacturing for the Taiwanese market.

In addition to Konami, products were seen from Sega, Namco, Capcom, Taito, Jaleco, SNK, Sigma, Eagle, Matsushita, and Yuvo. Unlike the AOU and ACME shows, however, there didn't really seem to be one overwhelming favorite. As expected, driving pieces from Sega's *Daytona USA* to Namco's *Ridge Racer* drew a lot of admiring onlookers, but not necessarily all that many more than did fighting game products or sports games. Other games, including fruit-machines and pinball games, were also on display. Finally, redemption-style products from a number of American companies such as Lazer-Tron, Coin Concepts, and Skee Ball were also seen.

In Japan, players may exchange tokens for tokens, but in Taiwan, that is illegal. Tickets, however, are legal, and a good number of games seen at the show were of this variety. At Liang Chun Enterprises, there was a game called *Goose Family*, which is a tic-tac-toe redemption-style game. Over at Sun Shin Technology, *Mini Bingo Circus*, another redemption game based on the popular parlor game. How is the redemption market doing in Taiwan? Most distributors of redemption games replied "fine," although Roger Liang of Creative International Public Relations Consulting (CIPRC) said that redemption was a good business until recently. "Nowadays, competition has become much more keen, and this is affecting operator income," he explained.

With the possible exception of the AMOA show, it would be difficult to find another exhibition outside of Japan where so many of that country's manufacturers had such a large presence. As in Japan, part of the reason for this is due to the popularity of video action games in the arcades, especially fighting games. The company responsible for the current fighting game craze, Capcom, was on hand with *Super Street Fighter*

II Turbo, the latest in the series. The response to the game appeared to be good, although not quite as intense as the Japanese reaction.

SNK Corp. has aggressively pursued Asian markets of late, and the reaction to *Art of Fighting 2* was good. "We expect to sell 6,000 to 7,000 units here in Taiwan," said a company spokesman. Other SNK games included *World Heroes*, which has done just as well as *Art of Fighting 2*. Another distributor that was drawing crowds was Funhouse International. Here one could see *Wani Wani Panic*, and *Golly! Ghost* (Namco), *Space Gun* and *Beat the Shark* (Taito), and *Beast Busters* (Sega). *Kaeru no Uta* (Komaya) was also available, one of the few non-Japanese trade shows it has been seen at.

Zahere is a distributor for Jaleco, Namco and Taito, and had a number of products for all three companies on hand. From Jaleco, there was *Basket Bull*. From Taito, two products, the *IDYA* simulator and *Challenge Hitter*, the combination video and skill game were both seen, and the latter game in particular drew good crowds. But the hottest pieces were from Namco. *Final Lap R*, *Nebulasray*, and *Uma! Uma! Godzilla* all attracted throngs of curious visitors, and despite the availability of *Ridge Racer*, *Final Lap R* was drawing quite a crowd.



Sega products could be seen in abundance at the show, primarily through the offerings of Sega Enterprises, Ltd., Sega Amusement Taiwan, Ltd., and Laxan Corp. *Super Chase* (2 units), *Virtua Fighter* and *Alien³ The Gun* all had their fans, but it was *Daytona USA* and *Jurassic Park* which were the center of attention. While debate rages in many other countries as to just which machine is better, *Daytona USA* or *Ridge Racer*, we seemed to detect a preference for the former at this show, if only because it is the newer of the two. Given that *Daytona* was one of the most expensive pieces on the floor, wouldn't it be difficult to persuade operators it was a worthwhile investment? "Not really," said one attendee. "We don't really purchase a piece like *Daytona USA* in the anticipation that it will make a profit. It's used more to bring in customers so that they will play other games."

Other games seen at these booths were *Super Bank-It* (Capcom), *The Who's Tommy* and *Tales From the Crypt* (Data East), *Quarter Mile* (Bromley), as well as the other well-known Sega piece *Virtua Fighter*. This particular game was also being shown on a 50" screen to great acclaim. As mentioned earlier, fighting games are still quite popular in Taiwan (though, according to some, not nearly as prevalent as they once were), and *Virtua Fighter* is, like elsewhere, an important part of this genre.

One of Taiwan's largest distributors was a company called the Pan Asia Amusement Co., Ltd., better known as PACO. The company is an official Taiwanese distributor of many different manufacturers, including Sega, Namco, Taito, Jaleco, Nihon Systems, Konami, Skee-Ball, Lazer-Tron, Crompton's, and Meltec. Here, products being promoted included *Digger's Prize* and *Flippa Winna* (Crompton's), *Danger Mine* (Skee Ball), *Simple Simon* (Lazer-Tron), and *Pot O' Gold* (Meltec). From Jaleco two products, *Alien Command* and *F1-Battle*, were doing well, especially the latter game. Bill Huang, a Sub-Manager for PACO, commented on the first day of the show that the company was "not satisfied" with the way things had gone because few buyers came. "The show in Taichung last fall was a little better, because it was bigger and we had more serious buyers," he said.

There is one Taiwanese company that has made a great effort of late to promote U.S.-style redemption in Taiwan: Entropy International. "We introduced redemption to Taiwan in 1991," explains Marvin Tsai, a supervisor in the sales department. "We opened an FEC on the second floor of a Burger King restaurant in Taipei with a variety of redemption games." Mr. Tsai then explains how the Taiwan redemption market developed. "In 1992, the market for redemption products grew by 100%. On the heels of this success came the Japanese manufacturers such as Sega and Namco. In the beginning, they made many mistakes, so we advised them on how to set up redemption properly."

In the FEC center above Burger King, Entropy has placed 130 machines from a variety of manufacturers including Doyle, Williams, Bromley's, I.C.E., Skee-Ball, and Lazer-Tron. One play cost NT\$10 (\$0.38). The games are adjusted so that the minimum win is 6-8 tickets per play. Each ticket is worth about NT\$0.40 (\$0.01). "Some players have won between 2,000 and 3,000 tickets," said Mr. Tsai. "As prizes, we give away small items such as coffee makers and small radios." Despite reports of market saturation, Mr. Tsai believes that there still is room for redemption - provided it is run correctly. "Our payout rates run between 30% and 40%. That's a fair return. Any less, and it will reduce the incentive to play."





A Pleasant Surprise

TAE '94 was a pleasant surprise. If some exhibitors were disappointed in the number of buyers present, there were those, especially from abroad, who expressed their admiration at the quality of the show. It was, compared to other some other smaller trade shows, a well-run, well organized event, as exhibitors went out of their way to assist those from abroad with obtaining information. The quality of the products on display also surprised many. Most of the games from the Japanese manufacturers were top quality simulation pieces while redemption games from American manufacturers were the main attraction at many a booth.

Noticeably absent were PC board manufacturers, although given current international pressure on Taiwanese copiers and the fact that market itself is changing, perhaps it was not so surprising. As to Taiwan's reputation as a copy kingdom, several Japanese who are familiar with the East Asian PC board market have told JAM that the way copy companies operate is as follows. Sales offices are located in Taipei, where initial contacts are made. Factories are located in Guangzhou or Shenzhen, where anti-counterfeit enforcement is loose (nonexistent?) at best. Hong Kong and Korea are said to serve as the main distribution centers. Most of the Taiwanese companies who came to TAE were distributors for the major U.S., Japanese, and European manufacturers.



There were also reported problems between the organizers of the TAE show the Taiwanese trade association CAMMA, the acronym for the Chinese Amusement Machine Manufacturers Association [and the sponsors of the TAE show last fall-Ed.]. According to a spokesman for one of the Japanese manufacturers, there were a number of complaints on the part of many within the Taiwanese industry. First was the size of the hall. It was too small to hold all who wished to exhibit. This was the cause of the second complaint: there were too many companies who were refused booth space. Finally, there were reports that some exhibitors were unhappy with Creative Public Relations International because money made from the show went into their pockets, and did not "benefit the industry." "Of course," said one exhibitor, "this doesn't mean that we won't be at the show next year. Whatever the problems, this is still an important show and we need to be here."

In the end, though, the 1994 TAE served notice to the industry worldwide that Taiwan is a market to be reckoned with. In particular, three areas, simulation games, redemption, and slot machine-type games have all gained ground of late. Those manufacturers from abroad who wish to enter the Asian market cannot afford to ignore the vast potential of the Taiwanese market and would do well to consider exhibiting at next year's show. As the Taiwanese industry moves to clean itself up and shed its image as a "copy kingdom," it will need a lot of help from those in the international amusement industry. If this year's show is any indication, things should be even better for next year. ■

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FAX: 44-905-72-4768

JUNE 2-4

WAMO

Racine Marriott
Racine, Wisconsin
U.S.A.
Contact: WAMO
TEL: 1-414-529-4704

JUNE 8-9

AAE

Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition
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HONG KONG
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FAX: 1-708-333-4086

JUNE 8-13

EXPO-DIVERSIONES '94

Expo Guadalajara
Guadalajara, Jalisco
MEXICO
Contact: AIFAD S.A. de C.V.
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FAX: 52-3-647-88-39

JUNE 9-10

CANADIAN GAMEXPO '94

Vancouver Convention Center
Vancouver, British Colombia
CANADA
Contact: Cascadia Pacific
Communications Inc.
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FAX: 1-604-684-0881

JUNE 23-27

SUMMER CES

McCormick Place
Chicago, Illinois
U.S.A.
Contact: Electronic Industries
Ass'n
TEL: 1-202-457-8700
FAX: 1-202-457-4901

JUNE 23

MULTIMEDIA BUSINESS FORUM

Higashi 3-22-14
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
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FAX: 81-3-3797-0346

JULY 20-21

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Exhibimex
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AUGUST 3-7

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AUGUST 4-6

SALEX

Mart Center
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FAX: 44-61-665-1260

SEPTEMBER 14

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AMUSEMENT MACHINE SHOW

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FAX: 81-3-3438-2721

SEPTEMBER 22-24

AMOA EXPO

San Antonio Convention Center
San Antonio, Texas
U.S.A.
Contact: AMOA
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FAX: 1-312-321-6869

SEPTEMBER 27-29

LEISURE INDUSTRY WEEK

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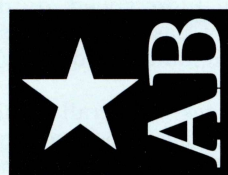
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"Yeah, he's at it again. Time to call out the boys, and have 'em bring those missiles. The ones they call Scud Hammers."

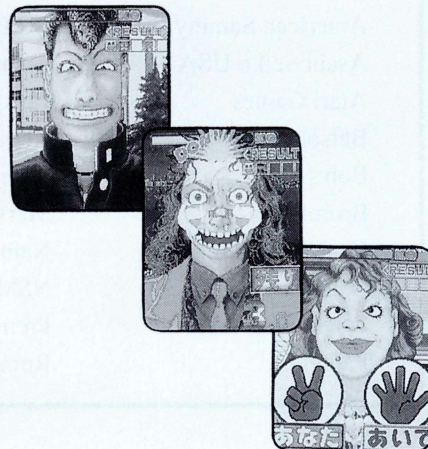
Whoops, right name, wrong scenario. Nope, this ain't a retake of *Missile Command*. In fact, it's got nothing to do with projectiles of any sort, guided or unguided, unless you consider a hammer to be a projectile. Which you might want to do, given that Jaleco is calling it a **Scud Hammer**.

The situation is thus: you've been given a rare opportunity. A rare, rare opportunity to get even with the people who frost your fanny the most. The policeman. The boss. Neighborhood toughs. Politicians. Before you can get even, however, you have to prove your worth. And to do that, you've first got to play rock-scissors-paper with them. Stick with this, 'cause it gets good. Alright, so you do it and you win. Now comes the fun part. You've got a hammer, and in front of you on the control panel is a head (made out of a cushion). You've got ten seconds or so; we think you know what to do...

Each player has five chances to play rock-scissors-paper. Each time you win, you get to pound away; losing earns you nothing. There are nine

opponents from which to choose, and their images appear on the screen in front of you. As you pound away at the cushion head, the damage is reflected on their video image. If you pound hard and fast enough, you can KO your opponent and move on to the next person in line. The machine can also be used for redemption where permitted.

So pound the blues away, and give Jaleco a call at +81-3-3708-4830, fax +81-3-3708-4822; +1-708-215-1811, fax +1-708-215-2642 in the U.S.; or +44-81-838-4600, fax +44-81-838-4515 in the U.K. Tell them you saw it in JAM.



NBA JAM™ TOURNAMENT EDITION

Midway



Although baseball is the national pastime and football something of a national obsession, basketball is arguably America's most widely played sport. With the revival in interest that came about in the 1980s, helped on by the presence of superstars like Larry Bird, "Magic" Johnson, and – His Airness – Michael Jordan, basketball has even broken national boundaries. It is even said that people who have never seen a basketball know who Mr. Jordan is.

About a year and half ago, Midway Manufacturing released a game called *NBA Jam™* that brought a healthy dose of the excitement of the game to the video game arcade, helped by the license granted the company by the NBA. The players' response had operators in the U.S. convinced – they voted it the Best Video Game of 1993. Midway took that as a vote of support, and now announces an updated version, **NBA Jam™ Tournament Edition**.

Basic game play remains the same, but a number of interesting tweaks and frills have been added. For starters, the size of the team rosters has been increased (up to five for each team, compared to two in the original). The inventory of player characteristics has

also been expanded to reflect real life performance and statistics. Categories now include: speed, dunks, 3-point accuracy, passing, power, steal ability, blocking, and performance in clutch situations.

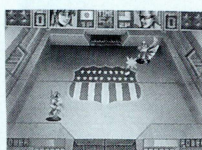
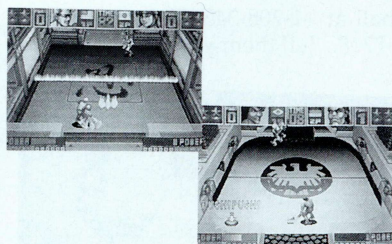
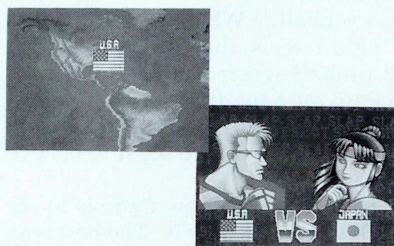
Changes in overall game play and strategy have also come about. Players can select same-team matchups as well as make half-time substitutions. There are also a number of special power-ups and secret moves available, as well as special players hidden in the program. Operators can elect to use the Tournament Mode without the power-ups.

For more information, contact your local Midway distributor or call them direct at +1-312-267-2240, fax +1-312-267-8435. Tell them you saw it in JAM.



SLAP SHOT

East Technology/Taito



Paul Newman released a movie about two decades ago that took a black-humored look at the world of ice hockey. It was filled with many memorable scenes and offered a rather bleak view of hockey violence in its tale of a coach trying to put together a winning team. The name of the movie was, of course, "Slapshot."

Despite the words of its detractors, hockey offers more to the viewer than just sticks raised in anger. More than anything else, one of the biggest attractions of the sport is the speed. This is fast moving game, with fast skating, passing, and shooting. East Technology took a look at the game, and decided they could bring some of that action to the video game screen in the form of their new Taito-distributed release, **Slap Shot**.

Slap Shot is a game for one or two players. Rather than play a full game, however, the match is a one-on-one winner takes all game. There are six players to choose from, with a few coming from non-traditional hockey playing countries. The characters are Billy (USA), Reika (Japan), Dorade (Brazil), Lung (China), Buchwald (Germany), and Stuart (England).

The viewing angle is from the stands behind player one's end of the arena.

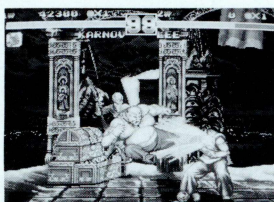
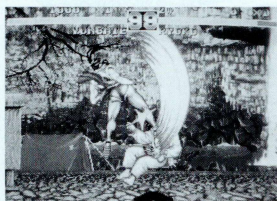
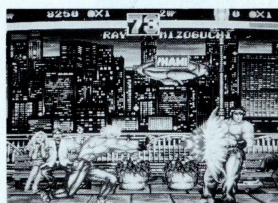
Each character comes with their own unique scoring technique. In order to bring this technique into play, the player has to hold down the shot button long enough for the special technique meter to reach full power. The goal is protected by a wall of blocks, in addition to the player-character of course. Clearing blocks away allows shots to get into the goal, so any would-be Wayne Gretzky had better to get work right away.

It may not be the NHL, but it's got a puckish feel of its own. For further information, contact Taito at +81-3-3222-4807, fax +81-3-3238-7965 in Japan; +1-708-520-9280, fax +1-708-520-1309 in the U.S.; or +44-71-323-4453, fax +44-71-636-7027 in England. Tell them you saw it in JAM.



FIGHTER'S HISTORY DYNAMITE

Data East



Video games and fisticuffs were made for each other, it seems. Not everybody is willing to take the time and energy to turn themselves into a dockside brawler, or monsieur savate, or a master of the martial arts. But, with the aid of a coin or two, you can hop down to the local arcade and do some damage.

A couple of years back, Data East entered the fray with their own take on the action, and now they've released an updated version they're calling **Fighter's History Dynamite** (in Europe, **Karnov's Revenge**). Basic game play has not changed much; the object is still to do in the other guy (or gal) before they can do you. However, there are some differences to be found. For starters, *Dynamite* is a NEO*GEO release. This means the game conforms to the NEO*GEO control board of joystick-plus-four-buttons. Button A is for jabs with fists, B is for roundhouses, C is for foot poking, and D is for serious kicks.

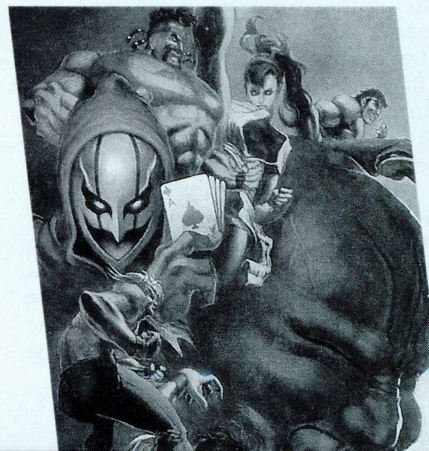
Next, two new characters have been added to the roster of eleven making for 13 in all. The two new characters are bosses from the first edition, the Russian fatman Karnov and the mysterious Clown.

Another interesting tweak is that

players now have special weak points. When a character's weak point (their Achilles heel, as it were) is hit, that part of the body lights up. If their opponent succeeds in striking that point three times in a row, the bruised character is left momentarily defenseless.

Finally, players can rush into the action or back themselves out of it quickly by moving their joystick in the desired direction twice in rapid succession. Otherwise, they might find themselves with a bearish revenge...

If TNT is your thing, then give Data East a call at +81-3-3220-8027, fax +81-3-3220-8032 in Japan, or +1-708-345-7700, fax +1-708-345-7718 in the U.S. Tell them you saw it in JAM.



TOMMY

Data East Pinball



©1994 Doug Johnson
©Data East Pinball, Inc. / Data East Corp.

It was always a big argument as to whether the Rolling Stones or the Who were the greatest rock'n'roll band on earth. With both groups more or less out of action, the question is a moot point (for some) these days. With their reputation for dynamic live shows, legendary offstage activities, and fussing and fighting between bandmates, the Who were certainly among the most colorful. Adding to their reputation were a number of musical experiments, the most famous being one of the first rock operas, "Tommy."

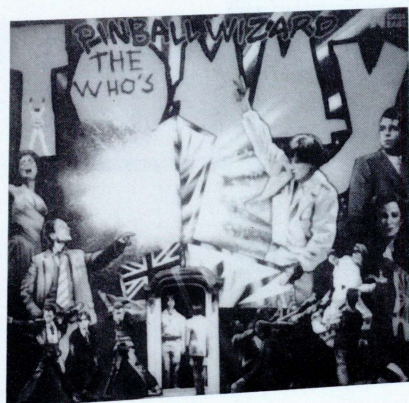
"Tommy" has since been revived to great acclaim as a Broadway show, and now the pinball wizard has made his move to an actual game in the form of Data East's **Tommy**. More properly called *The Who's Tommy Pinball Wizard*, this game replicates many of the story elements of Pete Townshend's tale. Data East Pinball Executive VP Gary Stern points out that, in the U.S., "Tommy" is already making a national tour in addition to its Broadway run, heightening the level of public awareness for such a license.

Data East brings their experience in creating suitable audio backing to the new table. It features 21 songs from the musical in parts or in their entirety

with vocals sung by members of the original Broadway cast.

Tommy also features dual ramps and spinners, triple flipper action, a magic mirror, and the unique flipper blinders. The character Tommy is, after all, "a deaf, dumb, blind kid who sure plays a mean pinball." When the player hits the right targets, they go into a multi-ball pinball wizard mode. Blinders come up over the flippers and players try to out-Tommy Tommy. As Data East says, "you have to see it to believe it."

The only way to know more is to see it, feel it, touch it, hear it. The best way to do that is to contact Data East Pinball at +1-708-345-7700, fax +1-708-345-7718. Tell them you saw it in JAM.



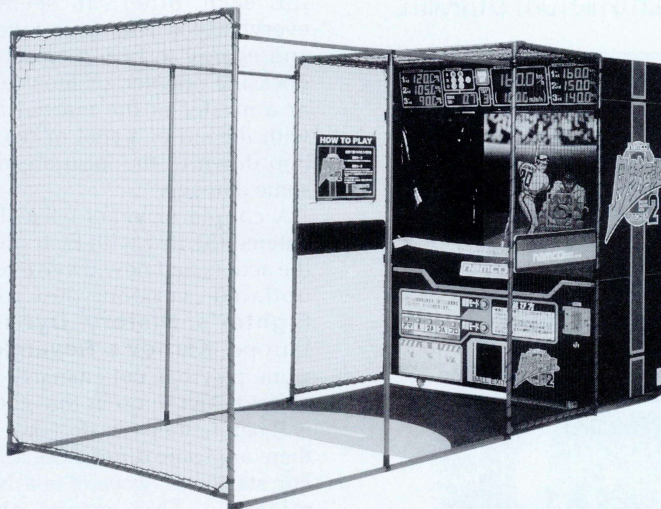
PITCHIN' PRO

Namco

Yes, as spring rolls around, people in certain parts of the world start limbering up their arms. Caps appear, cleated shoes are found in the bottom of the closet, bats and batting helmets are polished. Another baseball season is under way.

The dreams of kids likewise get fired up. One might want to be another slugging star like Hank Aaron (or Sadaharu Oh, as the case may be). Another wants to be Brooks Robinson, snaring line drives at third base and saving the World Series for the home team. And then there's the pitching stars, the ones with the (imaginary?) 100 mph fastballs, the sinkers that drop like rock as they reach the plate, and the curve balls that are scientifically impossible.

For those who dream of serving up these pitches, Namco presents **Pitchin' Pro**. This game features two modes, the Practice mode and the Game-in-Play mode. In the practice mode, the goal is to whiz those balls into the strike zone as fast as possible. The



display will show the velocity in either kilometers or miles per hour. The display also shows the highest three speeds of the day.

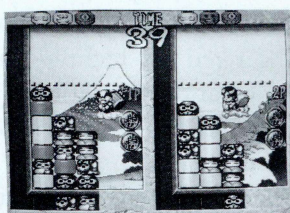
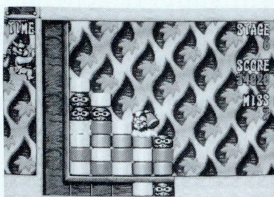
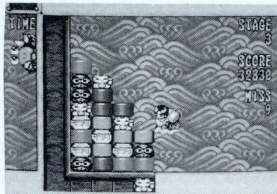
In the Game-in-Play mode, the would-be hurler finds his- or herself in a bottom of the ninth, two out, bases loaded, 2-and-0 situation. Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to pitch your team out of this mess. To make life a little more varied, the

player can select from among five levels of competition: amateur, A, AA, AAA, or professional.

If you ever wanted to be the next Cy Young, this could be your chance. Give Namco a call at +81-3-3756-2311, fax +81-3-3756-5967; +1-408-383-3900, fax +1-408-383-0128 in the U.S.; +44-71-581-5515, fax +44-71-584-5579 in the U.K. Tell them you saw it in JAM.

DHARMA

Metro



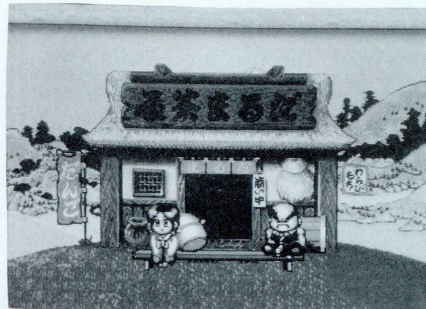
The success of *Tetris* has proven to many manufacturers that simple games presenting some variation of the original's falling blocks approach can make for a fun time. Called "puzzle game" in Japan, this genre has turned out to be a big source of income as well. *Columns* was a success, and *Puyo Puyo* continues to burn up the waves, as it were.

And the ideas just keep coming. One of the latest is the item from Metro, a little something called **Dharma**. The more literary-minded out there may recall having heard that name before in Kerouac's "Dharma Bums." The word itself means The Law, as in the Buddhist Law, but most Japanese know its *Daruma* variation as the name of the father of the Zen school. His image – a short, fat, bearded man with a smile on his face – has come to be seen as a bearer of good luck. People buy daruma dolls and use them as a focus for what might be called New Year's resolutions. With their comical appearance, it's also no surprise that their image turns up in odd places . . . like in a video game.

So, with the history lesson out of the way, we've got a game to consider. Blocks, daruma dolls, cats, and other characters fall from wherever it is these

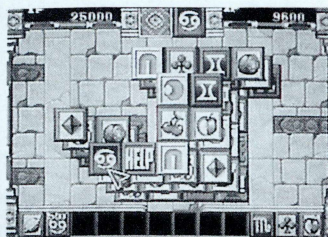
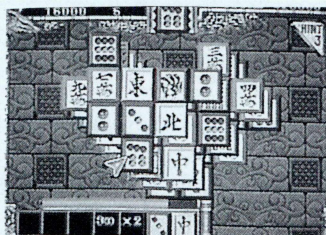
things fall from. If the player can line up a certain number of daruma dolls, everything in that line disappears. If the player doesn't do this, the screen starts to fill up. The object of the game is to clear the screen before time happens, and also before time runs out. If time runs out and you still have blocks left, those blocks are carried over to the next level. There are sixteen levels in all. One player can race the clock, or two players can compete.

It's your choice. You can either ponder the meaning of such teachings as "a flower does not talk" and "What is the sound of one hand clapping?", or you can take the easier way and contact the folks at Metro at +81-6-370-3790 or fax +81-6-370-3793. Tell them you saw it in JAM.



TORIDE II THE REVENGE

Metro / Able Corp.



In some ways, mah-jongg is to East Asia (and, if Woody Allen is to be believed, the New York Jewish community) what dominoes have been to Europe and its descendants. You get a bunch of tiles and do things with them.

Given one side is blank, it comes as no surprise that people have come up with games that involve guessing what lies on the other side. One variation involves matching pairs (American television viewers will recall the game show "Concentration"). In any event, it also serves as a good basis for a video game. A little while back Metro put just such a game in the form of *Toride* which did fairly well in the arcades. Well enough, in fact, that Metro has decided to follow it up with a new-and-improved version they're calling **Toride II: The Revenge**.

Now, before you get pictures of Vikings engaging in a blood feud, hold onto your hats. Given the nature of the game, things are lot more subtle than that. Basic game play remains unchanged. Remove tiles from the screen by matching them with their mate in the effort to clear the screen before the clock runs out. The tiles are much bigger than in the first edition, making it easier to differentiate

between them.

However, the new edition also features what they're calling a "story mode." In this mode, each level that the player clears away reveals another floor of a castle that our hearty hero (i.e. you) is trying to rescue. If you succeed in your quest to free all 15 levels, you are rewarded with a bonus round. The player can also play the level of their choice in the "a la carte" mode, or elect to compete with a friend. Finally, players can also select between different tile designs. The ability to concentrate is sold separately.

If you're looking for a new challenge, then contact Metro at the numbers listed above. And tell them you saw it in JAM.



AMOA Announces Interactive Arcade Project

The U.S. Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) has announced its participation in a project to create a nationwide interactive, digital multimedia network. Beginning with a two-state pilot, it is hoped that the network will eventually link together 100,000 game terminals throughout North America within three to five years.

The partners in the project are the National Amusement Network, Inc. (NANI) and EDS Corporation, a Texas-based information technologies applications firm. NANI is owned jointly by the AMOA and a Canadian company, TVphone, Inc.

The AMOA expects the network will allow its participating members to hold local, regional, and national tournaments. The Association also believes they will benefit from "improved management efficiencies, decreased maintenance expenditures, a potentially larger customer base, [and] game terminals with expanded multimedia capabilities," to quote their press release.

EDS Corp. will be the actual developer of the network. They will provide NANI with a range of software-related tools to be used in the development, management, and administration of the network. The systems devel-

oped will support general office applications as well as multimedia terminal applications.

Craig Johnson, president of NANI as well as past president of the AMOA, said, "This agreement is a major step forward for our industry. More and more, what's driving our industry is the need for technological excellence and innovation." For their part, EDS sees the arrangement as an opportunity to "showcase its wide-ranging multimedia capabilities to a truly global audience," according to John R. Harris of the firm's Communications Industry Group. □

Fun Expo Heads To Vegas

With the metamorphosis of Las Vegas from Sin City to – according to the *Los Angeles Times* – a "family-oriented destination," the family entertainment industry prepares to hit the Strip as the fourth annual Fun Expo rolls into the Las Vegas Convention Center, October 2-4. The show is focused exclusively on the development, operation and promotion of family entertainment centers, and it is expected that over 5,000 buyers will attend this year's show.

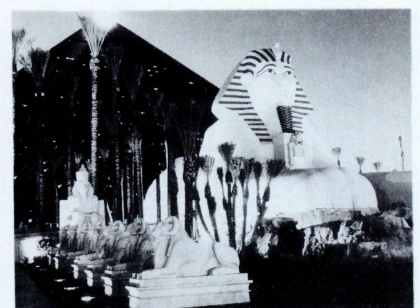
Among the major manufacturers exhibiting will be Amusement Source, Baytek, Betson, Bob's

Space Racers, Doyle International, GAMco, Pacer Manufacturing, Pepsi, Wisdom Industry, and Zamperla. Attendees will be from a wide variety of industries including miniature golf, bowling, skating, batting cages, go-kart tracks, military recreation centers, campgrounds, shopping centers, casinos, and resorts.

"We expect 25% more exhibitors this year, resulting in more diverse product representation than ever before," said Fun Expo show manager Bailey Beeken. "The fun center industry represents a yearly expenditure of nearly \$400 million, and growing, on amusement-relat-

ed products."

For more information on Fun Expo, contact Ms. Bailey at tel. +1-914-993-9200 or fax. +1-914-993-9210. □



The entrance to Luxor.

Capcom Injunction Rejected

On March 17th, Judge William H. Orrick of the Federal District Court in the Northern District of California denied Capcom U.S.A. Inc.'s motion for a preliminary injunction enjoining Data East's marketing and distribution of Data East's video fighting game *Fighter's History* and any newer versions of that game. Capcom had claimed that *Fighter's History* had infringed Capcom's audio visual copyright for its *Street Fighter II* family of video fighting games. Capcom also claimed that Data East had copied the "total concept and feel" of *Street Fighter II* in addition to copying certain fight characters and special moves.

Judge Orrick held that "Data East has not captured in *Fighter's History* the total concept and feel of the protectable expression in *Street Fighter II*. Rather, the similarities that result between the two games stem from Data East's emulation of the unprotectable, commonplace features of *Street Fighter II*, such as its stereotypical fight characters and its reliance on unorigi-

nal fighting techniques derived from the martial arts."

The Court further held that "Capcom cannot now withdraw from the public domain ideas and standardized expression. . . To do so would be commensurate to awarding Capcom a monopoly over a

range of characters and moves that it did not create. It would also allow Capcom to lay proprietary claim to all reality-based fighting games featuring human characters. Copyright law affords no such protection." □

Mountasia Purchases Malibu

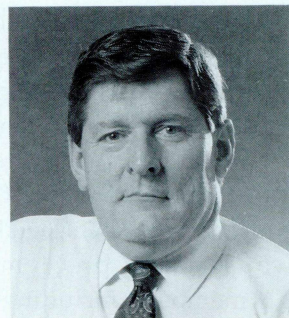
Mountasia Entertainment International, Inc. announced on March 11th that they had signed a contract to purchase Malibu Grand Prix Corporation's two flagship amusement centers, both located in Atlanta, Georgia. This non-dilutive acquisition, closing later this month, is in excess of \$11 million and will continue to operate under the Malibu name, through a license agreement with Malibu Grand Prix.

The Malibu Grand Prix Corporation, headquartered in Canoga Park, California, has over 30 amusement centers across the

States and is known for its "Virage" and "Malibu Sprint Car" race tracks. □

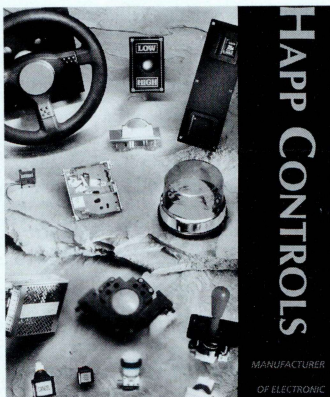
Bally Opens Sales Office

Bally Gaming Inc. President Hans Kloss announces the opening of a new sales and service office to oversee new and existing gaming accounts in the midwestern U.S. The office, to be located in suburban Chicago, will be headed by Rus Strahan. Mr. Strahan will serve as General Manager and will be responsible for sales and service in the midwestern region. Mr. Strahan comes from NSM America Inc. □



Happ Controls Issues Catalogue

Happ Controls Inc. announces the release of a new fifty-two page catalogue of their products, including joysticks, pushbuttons, trackball controls, driving controls, pinball parts, and a variety of miscellaneous accessories. For a free copy of the catalogue, write to: Happ Controls Inc.; 106 Garlish Drive; Elk Grove, Illinois 60007; tel: +1-708-593-6130, fax: +1-708-593-6137. □



SALEX To Have Separate Casino Area

SALEX, the South American coin-op and amusement trade expo, will have a separate area dedicated to the casino industry. World's Fair Exhibitions, SALEX co-organizers, announced the move after canvassing the opinions of the major manufacturers and suppliers of casino goods and services. It was generally felt that a separate area within the main exhibition – as seen at this year's ATEI in London – creates the best atmosphere for both exhibitors and visitors.

The section will be in Hall A of the exhibition, which is to be held at the Mart Center, Sao Paulo, Brazil from August 4-6. Visitors will be able to move freely between it and other parts of the show. South America offers a potentially huge market for the casino industry, as an increasing number of its 13 countries move towards more relaxed legislation for gaming. Brazil, for example, is

considering legalizing casinos.

World's Fair Exhibition Chairman Stephen Whatmore said that "the industry is priming itself for the outcome of the Brazilian debate and its repercussions throughout the continent. It is hardly surprising that SALEX'94 is being regarded as an essential opportunity for companies to make their presence felt. As organizers of the exhibition, we have listened to the requests of the industry for a separate casino section, and are happy to respond."

The casino industry was well represented at last year's inaugural SALEX expo, with Novamatic, IGT, US Casino, Huxley and Aristocrat among the major exhibitors. Of these, ITG and Aristocrat have already re-booked for SALEX '94 and others, including Universal Distributing of Nevada, USA, have reserved space.

For more information contact John Mcmanus at World's Fair

Exhibitions at +44-61-624-3687 or Sandie Harris at Ken Mather Public Relations on +4 61-236- 0677. □

ALG Signs Deal Down Under

American Laser Games has signed an agreement with Leisure and Allied Industries (LAI) of Perth, Australia to be the exclusive distributor of ALG games in the "Australasia" area, which includes Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. LAI, which has been in business for over 35 years, is Australia's largest operator and distributor. LAI has a close association with Coin Cascade Ltd., the New Zealand-based company. LAI has also opened a sales and distribution office in Singapore and will be opening offices in Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur later this year.

"American Laser Games needed a distributor with sales and service capability in all of these South Pacific countries. I've known LAI president Malcolm Steinberg for more than 20 years and have confidence that his company will represent us well," said Stan Jarocki, Vice President of Marketing for American Laser Games.

"American Laser Games is an innovator, the only U.S. company producing a full range of laser disc games and the first company to introduce CD-ROM technology into the coin-op market. I am impressed by their vision of the future for live-action games and am excited about teaming up with them," said Mr. Steinberg. ■

AAMA Watching Video Violence

Members of the American Amusement Machine Association have been busy recently concerning video game violence, participating in industry meetings and congressional hearings on the issue. The AAMA has also been monitoring state legislation which either seeks to ban violent video games or impose criminal penalties and fines on persons that knowingly allow video games that contain graphic violence or sexually suggestive material. Despite First Amendment concerns, if enacted, such legislation will cause many problems for AAMA members, including ones

like Williams-Bally-Midway, whose *Mortal Kombat* series has been at the center of much of the controversy.

AAMA has also been informed of activity by municipalities to impose legislation. In Sacramento, California, the mayor recently announced he intends to ban violent games in the city and has asked the state Attorney General to see if pornography laws could be used to ban violent games. Currently, there is legislation pending in four states that seeks either to restrict or outright ban video products deemed excessively violent. □

Virtual Reality Update

Part 2



Last month, we took a look at what has been happening in the international VR entertainment market over the past year. We now turn our attention to Japan, and what Japanese manufacturers, both within the coin-op industry and without, have been doing recently.

1993 was a busy year for large corporations such as Sega and Namco, who signed a variety of agreements with General Electric, Martin Marietta, and Evans & Sutherland, among others. Though the details of these agreements are not available, it is widely believed that such technology tie-ups will produce the next generation of coin-op simulation games. Many are very excited by the prospects, but there are some important concerns that must be addressed before Japanese manufacturers can expand the concept of VR entertainment on a world-wide basis.

by Eric Johnston

Sega vs. Namco

Before going into an analysis of what has been happening in Japan over the past year, it might be a good idea to point out some basic similarities and differences in the Japanese and international coin-op industries. First and foremost is the very concept of what VR entertainment is and what it covers. Japanese game manufacturers and the mass media often refer to any new high-tech simulation

product as "virtual reality," and the term, like that of "multimedia," is often bantered about indiscriminately. Of course, there are products which offer a variety of different levels of immersiveness – the traditional standard for judging whether or not a machine was virtual reality. Fully-interactive units with head-mounted displays (HMDs), such as the kind offered by Virtuality PLC, have not yet caught on in Japan to the extent they have elsewhere. In addition, as floor space is at a premium and Japanese operators are forced to consider size requirements, large-scale pieces that can accommodate a dozen people or so have very limited appeal. Much more popular are the

driving or jet simulation fighter-type games, and it is in this area in particular that Japan's larger manufacturers have concentrated their efforts of late.

For Japanese coin-op manufacturers, especially the major players such as Sega and Namco, 1993 may well be remembered as the year of the joint venture. Every month, it seemed, these two companies announced technology tie-ups with U.S. high-tech companies who were either (a) major electronics manufacturers or (b) formerly involved in the defense industry. Such announcements generated a great deal of speculation about the future of VR entertainment, and those in the Japanese coin-op industry knew that it was only a matter of time before the first fruits of these efforts became visible.

The news, therefore, that grabbed much of the headlines in the Japanese (and international) coin-op industry was the competition between Sega and Namco to turn agreements into products and get new technologies to market first. Back in February of last year, it appeared that Sega had the edge. The company premiered its 8-player *Virtua Formula* machine at the AOU show that month to rave reviews, and visitors also got a sneak preview of a new kind of driving simulation game that the company was working on. Dubbed *Daytona*, Sega officials promised that the graphics and the texture-mapping of the new game were beyond anything seen in coin-op entertainment before. This game was to be the first Sega driving game to employ an Intel chip, the 32-bit i960 RISC (reduced instruction set computer) chip, while the graphics technology was developed with Martin Marietta, the company which has done a great deal of work in VR research for the U.S. military. Although the *Daytona* version shown at the 1993 AOU show was still in development, it looked as if Sega would lead the way in driving simulators.

But the show came and went without any word as to when *Daytona* would hit the streets. Then, a few months later, two announcements generated a great deal of excitement. The first was that Namco had formed a joint venture with Evans & Sutherland, the very company that had pioneered the concept of virtual reality back in the 1960s, and widely regarded as the producer of the most advanced military simulation software. It was this expertise that Namco perhaps hoped to employ in simulation driving and flying games.

The second announcement came in June. Sega declared they had formed a joint venture with W Industries, which was soon to change its name to Virtuality PLC and offer public stock, in the hopes of utilizing that company's strengths and experience in the VR entertainment market. As summer turned into fall, those involved in the Japanese VR entertainment industry looked to the Japanese AM show with the hope that new VR entertainment products would be

seen. *Daytona* was still not out, and many people wondered just what the delay was. *Virtua Formula* was still going strong, though, and its predecessor *Virtua Racing* had become a success story in almost every country it was introduced.

The technology battle.

In the end, it was Namco that won the race to bring advanced driving-simulator games to the market first. *Ridge Racer*, with highly detailed texture mapping, interesting game play, and, most importantly perhaps, a reasonable price, drew crowds of admiring operators throughout the Japanese AM show. Where was Sega? The company had its own hit, but it was a fighting game called *Virtua Fighter*. Commercially, both games would go on to become top earners in their genres respectively, but it was clear, at least for the moment, that Namco had gained the upper hand in the battle to introduce high technology simulation pieces.

It was also around this same time that Namco signed a basic agreement with Magic Edge Inc., manufacturers of the Hornet 1 simulator. Under the terms of the agreement, Namco was to be the sole sales agent in both Japan and the U.S. The Hornet 1, which simulates an F-18 Hornet fighter/bomber, was seen at the IAAPA show in November, and according to Magic Edge president Michael Chan, Namco had designed a new software package specifically for the Hornet.

By the beginning of this year, those who were watching the Sega-Namco technology battle turned their attention to London, where the ATEI show, Europe's first major international trade show of the new year, was to take place. Both Namco and Sega pulled out all stops with large booths reminiscent of the Japanese AM show, but Namco went the extra mile, displaying the full-scale Eunos Roadstar version and a three-screen version of *Ridge Racer*. For their part, Sega drew a lot of attention with the four-car version of

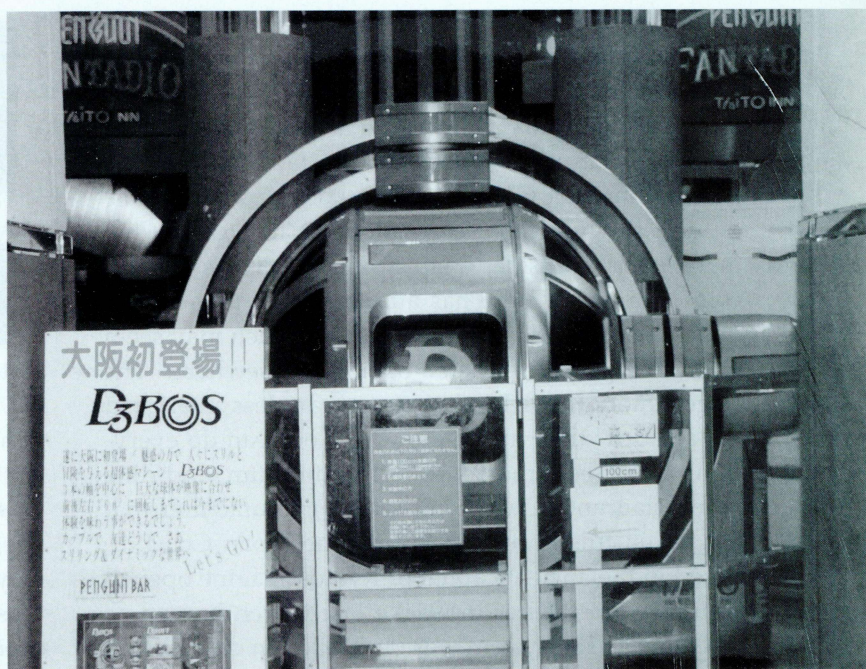


Virtua Formula, along with their AS-1 simulator, and proudly announced on the first day of the show that the first *Virtua Formula* piece would go in Funland, the amusement complex in London's Piccadilly Circus. Both companies were very happy with the response their VR entertainment products generated at the show, although the high price of such pieces had many concerned about their profitability. Visitors to the Sega booth once again saw a sample of *Daytona*, but more than a few people began wondering if the company had waited too long.

Finally, at the AOU show in Tokyo in February, *Daytona USA* made its debut, and put Sega back in both the limelight and the driving simulation race with Namco. Lines were long, and it was clear from *Daytona's* superb graphics that Sega had spent a lot of money on research and development. The reaction from the Japanese industry was that this was a "must" piece, despite the high price. Those in the international industry began speculating as to whether *Daytona* or *Ridge Racer* would ultimately become the most successful in their own countries, as well as which game was better. Points were awarded to Sega for graphics technology and realism, and to Namco for texture-mapping and game play. At the ACME show in Chicago, both pieces received rave reviews for their advanced technology, although operators liked the lower price of *Ridge Racer*. At the same time, Sega has made plans for a 2-player version of *Daytona* to be released sometime this month. Heading into the summer, the race between Sega and Namco grows ever more intense, and it will be interesting to see where things stand by the Japanese AM show in September, and whether or not the next generation of VR entertainment for the coin-op industry will be available by then.

Smaller companies offer specialized products.

Although the Sega-Namco technology tie-ups and simulator battles dominated much of the trade press news last year, it would be a mistake to assume that only these two companies were involved in VR entertainment in Japan. Certainly, as far as the coin-op industry is concerned, these two companies play very dominant roles in the expansion of the VR entertainment market, but there were others making news in 1993 as well. Companies such as Nihon Selmo Inc., a Tokyo-based concern which produces a variety of simulation packages for museums, exhibitions, and other firms outside the amusement industry, was seen at the Japanese AM show exhibiting two products *Psycho Diver* and *Guardian*. Nihon



Selmo serves as a developer to a number of major Japanese coin-op companies, including Taito. Their products can be seen at a number of museums and exhibitions throughout Japan. A small company, they do not at this point have major overseas ambitions, preferring instead to work through established players in Japan. Nevertheless, the quality of their software and simulation projects have impressed quite a few people overseas.

Kaga Electronics, is another small Tokyo-based corporation that has developed simulation machines for entertainment purposes. The XR4/S-K simulation ride premiered in May of last year, and the software package shown was the above-mentioned *Psycho Diver*. Kaga has announced plans to put out two new titles a year, in cooperation with Nihon Selmo and other third-party manufacturers.

Taito has had their share of success stories with VR entertainment products recently as well. The D³BOS is a small revolving simulator that takes players on a spin through several different software adventures, including a live-action dune buggy and roller coaster adventure. At their Taito Circus arcade chains, long lines in front of the D³BOS can often be seen. At the 1994 AOU show, Taito had a simulation piece on display that they called "Virtual Cube." Developed in cooperation with Sanyo Electric Co. Ltd., Taito officials stressed that this piece was still in the development process. "We're just testing the waters," said one Taito official.

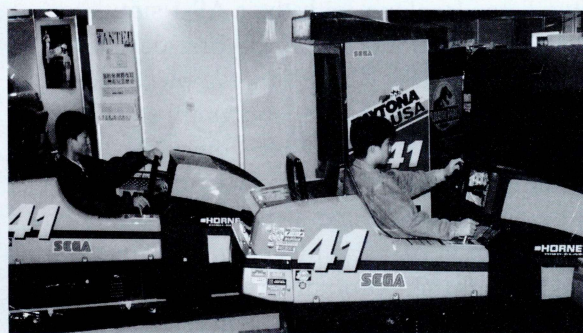
As reported many times in JAM, the focus of arcade operations in Japan of late has been on high-tech, upscale locations. These operators are doing so partly to improve their image, but also because of a Japanese public that has come to expect very high levels of cleanliness and service from the amusement industry. At the same time, non-traditional amusement location

operators are entering the industry in record numbers, bringing with them new ideas for location theme and design. Coin-op games, especially VR entertainment-type games, have become an important part of their product mix. Those who are familiar with the Japanese market often hear manufacturers use phrases such as "integrated entertainment" centers. What many people outside of Japan don't realize is that the coin-op industry here has attached itself to a variety of leisure operations of late, some of which may seem quite strange to traditional operators elsewhere. The larger, more far-sighted operators are less interested in "arcades" than in centers where one can do everything from see a movie, to visit a museum, and dine in a restaurant. One example of a manufacturer that has taken this approach is Imagine Japan Co., Ltd. Based in the ancient capital of Kyoto, Imagine opened a simulation theater in Osaka last March known as 3rd Planet. The system was developed in cooperation with two well-known American companies, Industrial Light & Magic and Showscan Inc. As part of the total experience, there is a Brazilian restaurant (complete with live samba performances) on the second floor and a pub on the third. However, companies such as Imagine are still the exception rather than the rule.

Another very important difference between Japan and other countries is the way VR entertainment is marketed in each. In England, Virtuality PLC has set up its own entertainment centers which usually contain only their own products, while in America, Battletech centers and Virtual World Entertainment operate as almost separate entities unto themselves. For a variety of reasons, including the above-mentioned space restrictions, Japanese amusement facilities are under extreme pressure to make the most of every square inch of space. This means introducing a wide variety of VR entertainment products, or directly combining arcade facilities with other amusement forms, no matter how unrelated they may seem to some.

Integrated skill-video games wave of future?

Finally, what lies ahead for the rest of this year? At the AOU show, most Japanese operators went away disappointed with what they saw, but there were two developments noticed that are worth keeping an eye on. The first is the integration of physical skill games with video. Examples seen at the AOU include Taito's *Real Punchers* and Jaleco's *Scud Hammer*. In the former, players have their picture taken and then superimposed on a screen. Punch the bag and watch as the facial picture becomes dis-



torted. In the latter game, the player can take out his/her frustrations on their boss, wife, wife's lover, or a host of other characters. At the risk of contributing yet another meaningless phrase to the lexicon, these two new games may be termed "virtual interactive," as they combine traditional carnival-style game play with video action, rather than virtual reality. If these kinds of games take off in Japan this spring, expect to see more of them later in the year at the AM show, as well as overseas.

Fully-interactive virtual reality, that is, those products with some sort of head-mounted display, is almost non-existent in Japan. Last year, Virtuality PLC signed an agreement with an Osaka-based company called Empire to sell their machines in Japan. That deal fell through, and Virtuality's products were seen in virtually no arcades in 1993. This situation may soon change, however. At the beginning of 1994, the company announced they were planning to open up an office in Japan to market their products more aggressively. At the same time, Division International Ltd., whose Pixel-Planes technology which was first seen at the ATEI show, is said to be involved in negotiations with a number of major Japanese manufacturers.

Yet, there are skeptics within Japan about these kinds of systems. Namco's chairman, Masaya Nakamura, in a recent interview with England's *Amusement Business* magazine, indicated that he had some doubts about machines with HMDs being the only viable form of VR entertainment. Certainly, Japanese manufacturers possess the technological knowledge to produce machines with head mounted displays. The fact that they have not yet done so indicates they are not yet convinced that such systems are the best way to go. This could very well be due to the exceptionally high standard of cleanliness now demanded by Japanese customers, not only in arcades but in society in general. In 1994, VR entertainment, at least as far as Japan is concerned, will encompass advanced simulator technology, and will be marketed in ever-more upscale entertainment facilities. Hopefully, the long-awaited first products from the Evans & Sutherland and other tie-ups will become more visible this year. At the moment, Japan's VR entertainment market is still simulator-based. It will be interesting to see just where the technology is next year. ■

What's Out

- in Japan -

A partial list of recently released products for the Japanese market.

Super Street Fighter II Turbo

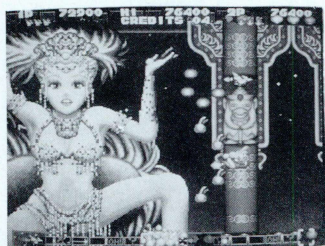
Capcom



The latest in *SFII* series. In this version, a new feature called a "Super Combo" system has been introduced. Each player has their own signature combination attack. Each time they use this attack, they gain power on a special "combo meter". When their meter reaches a certain point, they get to unleash their Super Combo Attack. 16 characters in all to choose from.

Fantastic Journey

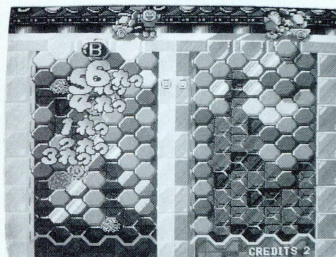
Konami



This horizontal-scroll shooting game is the successor to the company's popular *Parodius*, and features a variety of parodies. Game play is the same as its predecessor. In this version, two player simultaneous play is possible and the number of characters has been increased from four to eight. Three attacking modes are available including auto, semi-auto, and manual.

Poto Poto

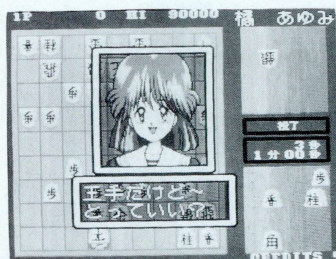
Sega Enterprises



A competitive puzzle game that uses four different colors of hexagonal blocks called Poto stones. The object is to arrange the Poto stones, which are falling from the top of the screen, into a hive-like structure. Line up four of the same color to make them disappear. Line up five to attack your opponent.

Mayjinsen

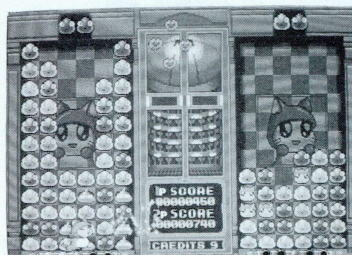
Seta/Visco



A mah-jongg video game where the player is pitted against female characters. With RISC chips providing the computer power, the computerized opponent can react quickly and counter the player's move, no matter how complex the strategy may be. The computer can recognize about 10,000 different theories, making it a very formidable opponent.

Hebereke No Popuun

Sun Denshi



A two-player competitive puzzle game that features characters from the consumer software hit *Hebereke*. Line up "popuun" (one of the characters from *Hebereke*) tiles falling from the top of the screen in pairs either vertically, horizontally or diagonally to make them disappear and to attack your opponent.

The Who's Tommy

Data East

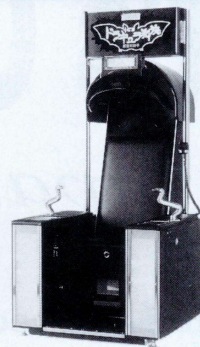


©1994 Doug Johnson
©Data East Pinball Inc.
Data East Corp.

Data East's 22nd pinball game features the soundtrack from the Broadway musical "Tommy". This game also introduces a special device to make the flippers invisible. Game features 6 multi-ball play. The playfield is simple in design so that a player can spot the target easily.

Dracula's Lie Detector

Human



A lie-detector/psychological test game. Answer "yes" or "no" to the eight questions the computer asks. The hood that covers a player's face is equipped with a built-in lie-detector, and at the end of the game, creates a psychological profile based on the player's response to the questions. Results are then printed out.

Scud Hammer

Jaleco



If you want to blow off steam, this game is for you. First, play the rock-scissors-paper game five times with a variety of computer opponents including a policewoman, a company president, and so on. When player wins, they do "damage" to their opponent on the video screen by bashing a doll on the control panel with a mallet.

Dynamite Shot II

Kato Manufacturing



The second version of the pachinko-based token game *Dynamite Shot*. This one features a color liquid crystal slot and playfield based on a horse-racing motif. Game play is similar to its predecessor: line up the same symbols to open the goal.

Kenseimogura

Capcom/Sigma/Togo



A two-player, competitive mole-whacking game based the two *SF II* characters Ryu and Chun-Li. Object of the game is to try to whack more moles than your opponent within a set amount of time. The winner can then move on to challenge Bison, another *SF II* character. A 25" monitor displays the action as well as the scores.

Let's Go Gyaos!

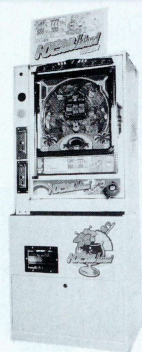
Taiyo Jidoki



This 9-reel, 8-line token game is designed for children, and is based on Gyaos, a green dinosaur. If any row is completely "dinosaur"-ed, the player wins. If the center row is all green dinosaurs, the player wins triple the amount displayed in tokens. Size: 0.398 L x 0.350 W x 1.150 H (m).

Tropical Island

Takara Goraku



A single player pachinko-type token machine that features a tropical atmosphere, which is created by backlighting. If the ball falls into a "hit" spot, the digitized roulette starts to spin. If three 7s are lined up, 90 tokens are paid out. The payout ratio can be adjusted by the operator.

Super Soccer

Tasko



In this prize game, the object is to pass a soccer ball to the goal by tilting the playfield right and left with a steering wheel. Avoid the goalkeeper and defenders moving in front of the goal. If the ball falls into a ditch along the playfield, you lose.

Sonic No Space Tours

Sega Enterprises



This is a roulette-type prize game designed for shopping arcades. It features the company's Sonic the Hedgehog character. If the miniature plane with Sonic stops on *atari* (hit), a 75-mm capsule is dispensed. Even if it doesn't, a 30-mm capsule is dispensed. Size: 0.60 L x 0.60 W x 1.360 H (m).

Janken Fukubiki

Banpresto

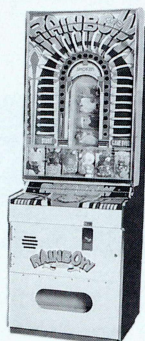


©Nintendo

A prize game that uses Nintendo's Super Mario as its motif. Play the stone-paper-scissors game with Mario three times. Win once and get a card. Win twice and receive a 75-mm capsule prize. Win three times and receive both.

Rainbow

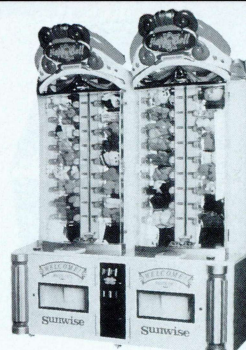
Showa Giken Kogyo



In this prize game, play starts with players' selecting a small lamp beside neon tubes. The tubes begin to light up in sequential fashion. Players watch the neon tubes, and using a track-ball, try to stop the flow of light on the tube beside the previously selected lamp. Match the tube with the lamp to win a prize.

Happy Bell

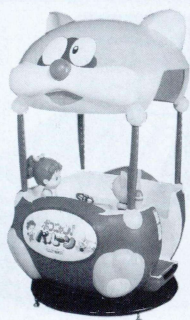
Sunwise



A prize game that comes in a red and white cabinet with a bell. Punch a stick on the control panel to make the light move up in rows. If it stops on a "lucky" point set up on each row, the bell rings and the toy prize on the row is dispensed. The machine can stock up to 36 prizes at once.

Pokonyan Balloon

Capcom

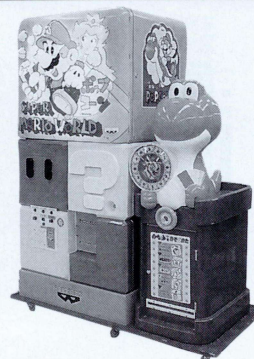


©1993 Fujio Fujiko,
NHK, Shogakkan,
Nihon Herald Films

A stationary ride based on Pokonyan, a character from a popular animated TV program. With the built-in monitor, passengers can join Pokonyan on the balloon for a journey through an animated world. Character cards are also dispensed. It can accommodate up to two children and one adult.

Super Mario World Popcorn

Banpresto

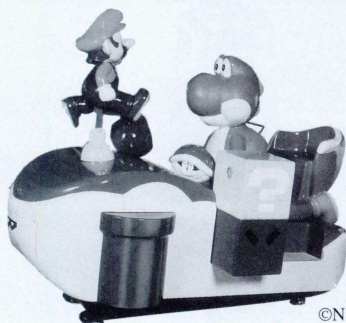


©Nintendo

A popcorn vending machine based on Nintendo's Super Mario. Select one of three flavors including salt, butter and chili, and play a roulette game while waiting. Victory earns you a soft drink. Size: 0.73 L x 1.34 W x 1.80 H (m).

Super Mario Seesaw

SNK



©Nintendo

A seesaw-type game with a Super Mario design scheme and a Yoshi seat. While in operation, Mario, who is mounted on front, moves back and forth. Three buttons are used to control the action and the audio. After the game is over, a card based on the popular character is dispensed.

Fishing Captain

Yuei



A fishing game for children's arcades. There are three fishing lines. Pushing a button makes one of them light up. If this line catches a fish, tokens are dispensed. However, if it catches empty cans or old shoes, the player loses. The number of tokens paid out equals the number on which the roulette wheel stops on.

Super AYA

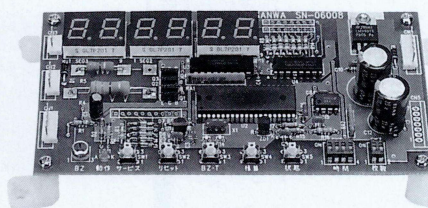
IMS



A coin-op version of computer dating. After answering several questions, the player is matched with their ideal partner, who really exists among hundreds of registered files in the computer. Everybody can register their own private files for ¥500 (\$4.85). Files include facial photo taken with camera in machine.

Video Game Timer

Sanwa Denshi



This circuit board functions as a timer by being attached to a cabinet. Game is over when the preset time expires, rather than when a player loses. Clock can be set for up to 60 minutes, depending on the number of coins inserted. Suitable for beginners who may not win as easily as expert players.

Theme Parks in Japan

The construction of new aquariums has experienced a sharp rise in Japan.

These projects have varied in size from major world-class attractions to smaller affairs that attempt to provide more of a local flavor.

Shinagawa ward, a Tokyo neighborhood that sits on the Bay, has a two-year old aquarium of its own that sits somewhere in the mid-range of that scale, offering exhibits with both local and broader appeal.



The entrance to the Shinagawa Aquarium.

The waters of Edo.

The popularity of aquariums has been rising around the world over the last few years, and nowhere is this more true than Japan. A handful of prominent projects have opened up during that time, including the Osaka Aquarium with a layout borrowed from the New England Aquarium in Boston (and designed by the same architect). These projects have served to add fuel to the fire, and a great number of the watery menageries have sprung up around the country.

Given that Japan, as an archipelago, is surrounded by ocean, it comes as no surprise that the seas have played a great role in the development of Japanese culture. The country's most famous contribution to world cuisine, for example, wouldn't be possible without fish. As is the case in many other countries, most of the major cities are seaports. Although Kobe and Yokohama are probably the most famous overseas, Tokyo nonetheless has substantial port facilities

of its own, and a history of links to the ocean.

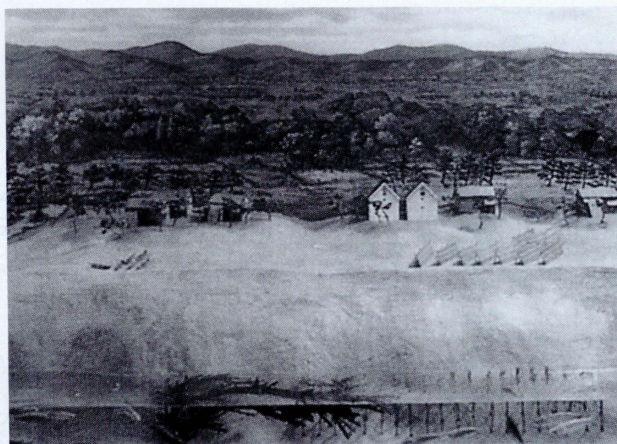
Though the waters may be polluted and lifeless today, the seas of old Edo, Tokyo's former name, were once filled with fish of great quantity and quality. The phrase *Edomae* (literally, "before Edo," as in "standing before Edo") referred to the catch from those waters, and is still used today to refer to a type of high-grade sushi.

The fishing ships bearing their catches came into port at the docks in Shinagawa, one of the wards of Tokyo. The image of Shinagawa in Japanese art and literature is associated with nets, seaweed, and fish. Lying as it did at the start of the famed trunk road Tokaido, the main artery for traffic between Osaka, Kyoto, Nagoya, and Tokyo, it also became known as a place of amusements and entertainment, in addition to its natural role as a staging point for surface shipments.

Edomae reborn.

Today, Shinagawa is no longer as connected to the sea. Land reclamation projects have resulted in the loss of the direct access to Tokyo Bay that was once the lifeline of the neighborhood's fisherman population. Port facilities were shifted to manmade islands in the Bay and down the coast in Yokohama. However, the association of Shinagawa with the ocean remains strong in the Japanese mind. Reflecting that tradition, in 1985 the Shinagawa Ward Office announced plans to create an aquarium in Shinagawa Public Park. The 12.4 hectare park, opened in 1982, already features a ball park, tennis courts, a swimming pool, and a small campground. The ward office felt that an aquarium would be an appropriate finish for the facility.

The details of aquarium planning were ironed out with public assistance. Ward residents were invited in July 1988 to offer their own suggestions as to what



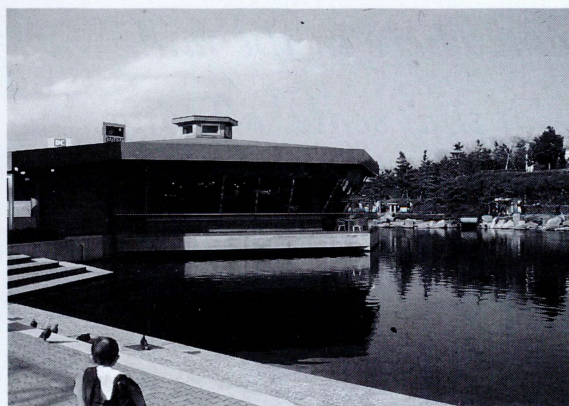
Special exhibit tanks include the Edomae seaside.

species should be kept at the aquarium and how they should be presented. Following this, the ward announced open bidding for the construction of the aquarium in September of that year. In March 1989, the three winners were revealed: Sunshine City Co., Ltd.; Sunshine Enterprises Co., Ltd.; and Environmental Design Co., Ltd. Environmental Design would handle the actual construction, while the two Sunshines would be responsible for aquarium management, according to an agreement reached in March 1990 by the winners with the Shinagawa ward office. The two Sunshine firms were already experienced in aquarium management, having opened Japan's highest aquarium, called Sunshine City, in a Tokyo skyscraper.

The Shinagawa Aquarium opened on November 19, 1991. The public reaction to the facility has been quite favorable — more than 2 million visitors passed through its doors in the first twelve months. As Shinagawa ward has a population of only 320,000, it is obvious that the aquarium is drawing customers from outside the area that it was originally intended to serve. Most likely, the majority of the visitors are coming from surrounding wards in the Tokyo area. The developers of the aquarium had originally expected it would serve as a way for the ward resi-



The aquarium also features a restaurant (below) with a view of the pool around the facility (at left).





One of the more popular attractions at the aquarium is the "Petting Pool" (left and above).

dents to get back in touch with the seagoing heritage it had long since lost; the results, however, have obviously been quite different. Needless to say, their estimate of 300,000 visitors per year has proven to be quite a ways off the mark!

Because it was designed to serve only a small community, the aquarium is rather small in comparison with its larger counterparts that have sprung up in the wake of the aquarium "boom." It features one above ground floor and two basement levels, with a total floor space of 3,300 m². Its tanks hold 10,000 animals from 300 species in 1,200 metric tons of water. Next door to the aquarium is a small restaurant. Working at the aquarium are twenty-three full-time staff and twenty part-time workers. The aquarium is located within reasonable walking distance of three train lines. For those too lazy to walk, a bus service is also offered from the two more distant stations. Total construction costs for the facility came to ¥3 billion (\$28.6 million).

Aquarium management believes the biggest factor in the facility's initial success was the notice it received from the mass media. The free publicity given by television features and notices in magazines resulted in the aquarium becoming known around the country. Many visitors included the aquatic display as one stop on an all-Tokyo amusement park itinerary. Since that first year, however, the number of visitors has

dropped off. 1992 saw 1.6 million pass through the gates, and the number was expected to be still lower for 1993. This seems to be an affect of both the lingering recession and the fact that the facility is no longer brand new.

An underwater tunnel and dolphins.

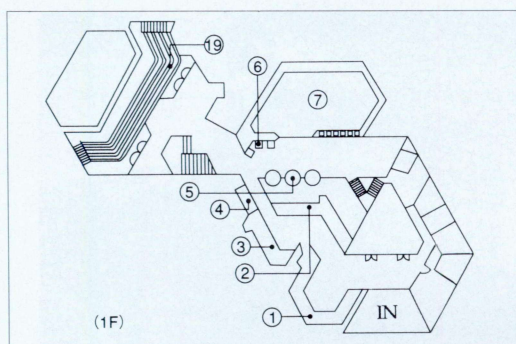
The exhibits have been divided into two areas, one focusing on sea level waters and the other on the deeps. The latter floor is highlighted by a 20 meter-long underwater tunnel, the first of its kind in Tokyo. The idea of such a tunnel originated in a New Zealand aquarium, but more and more facilities have copied the idea. Certainly, walking through the tunnel offers one a different point of view on the aquatic life than the one normally given from walking by windowed tanks. By some stretch, one might even think of it as deep sea diving without the diving.

As with any aquarium, each of the smaller tanks focuses on a particular ecological niche. Display zones include the rivers around Tokyo Bay, the "Edomae" waters, Shinagawa relationship with the sea, the tides, and other exhibits that reflect management's desire to evoke the spirit of the neighborhood's past.

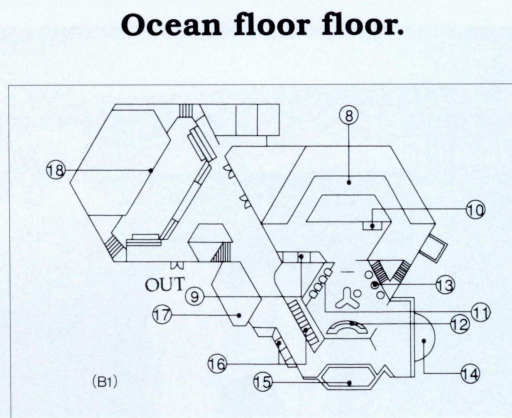
In addition to the tunnel, popular exhibits include "The Jewels of the Ocean," a tank featuring brightly colored tropical fish, and the "Petting Pool," as it were, where visitors can actually touch and hold such creatures as the sea urchin and starfish. Finally, there are the aquarium's main attractions, the dolphin, seal, and sea lion tanks. The dolphins and sea lions also put on shows, the only such attraction in the



The Jewels of the Ocean display.



Sea level waters floor.



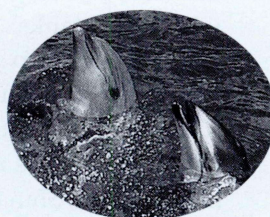
Ocean floor floor.

Shinagawa Aquarium exhibits.

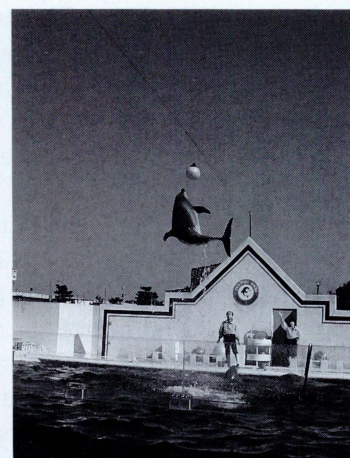
1. The rivers around Tokyo Bay.
2. The waters of Edomae.
3. Shinagawa and the sea.
4. Ocean currents and sea life.
5. Fish that form schools.
6. The undisturbed seas.
7. An invitation to the deep seas.
8. The underwater tunnel.
9. Fish of the polar regions.
10. Open-water tortoises.
11. Noisy fish!
12. The petting pool.
13. Quiz corner.
14. The jewels of the ocean.
15. The great rivers of the world.
16. Astonishing aquatics.
17. Sea lions.
18. The world of dolphins.
19. The Dolphin and Sea Lion Stadium.



An underwater tunnel provides a different perspective.

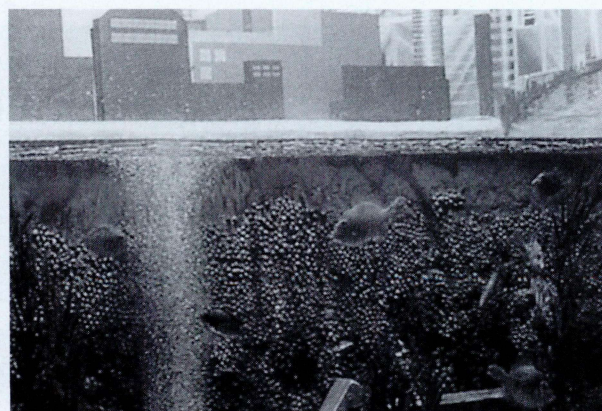


A dolphin show has proven to be the aquarium's biggest draw.

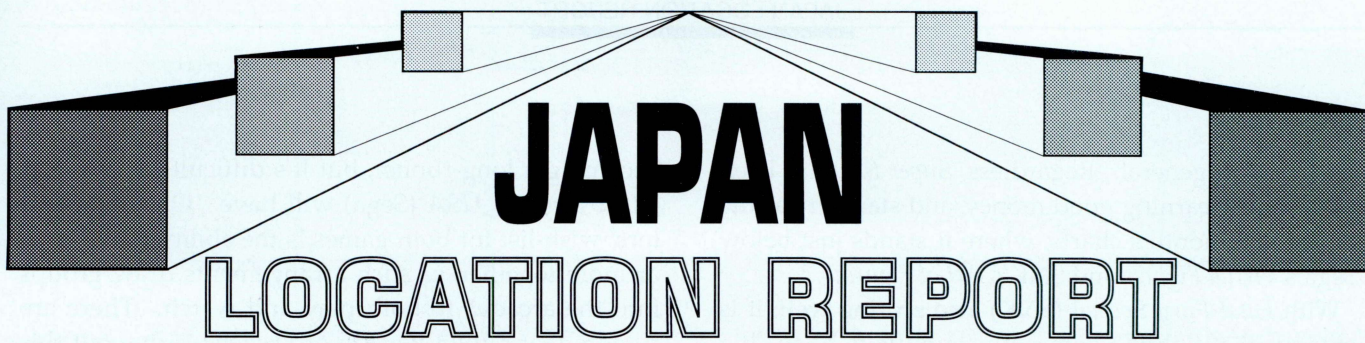


Tokyo area. There are four shows per week, three featuring dolphins and one featuring sea lions, plus extra shows on weekends and holidays.

As noted earlier, the aquarium has attracted a wide range of customers, including school field trips, family groups, and young couples. The latter are the most frequently seen, as the aquarium has become something of a dating hot spot, replacing the zoo on the entertainment list. One advantage aquariums have over zoos is, simply, they are cleaner. Furthermore, being an indoor facility, it is warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Finally, the admission charges are quite reasonable, and public transportation access is quite good. In a word, Shinagawa ward has come up with a winner. ■



The Shinagawa and the sea exhibit.



JAPAN

LOCATION REPORT

The Japanese academic calendar runs from April to March. As such, the month under consideration (mid-February to mid-March) marks the start of a transition period, with some customers graduating and new ones moving in. Operators are also feeling the effects of a powerful hit game that is sapping away customers from those arcades that don't have it. Adding to the stir, it is rumored that Sega is considering a move into that most Japanese of amusements, pachinko.

Sega rumored to enter pachinko biz.

The biggest news of the recent AOU Expo for many was the rumor that Sega Enterprises was considering getting into the pachinko business. The rumors were sparked by a story that appeared in the February 1st edition of *Keizaikai*, a Japanese economic journal. Although the amusement is rarely seen outside of Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, it is nonetheless a major cash cow in Japan. Currently, Sega has a business tie-up with pachinko machine manufacturer Heiwa Co., Ltd, and Sega is reportedly using the connection to research pachinko operations. Most likely, they would opt to create entertainment complexes that house game arcades and pachinko parlors on separate floors but under the same roof.

The sticking point is that the law governing the two industries, the Public Morals Act, makes it very difficult for one company to do business in both areas [See last month's interview with AOU President Yasuzo Ume-hara for an outline of the legal status of amusements and pachinko.-Ed.]. The Act comes up for revisions and renewal every five years, and with next year marking the end of the current five period, there are moves under way to have it amended. The National Police Agency, which has jurisdiction over this area, is said to be preparing for a possible amendment. With crane games and other machines falling into the gray area between the two businesses, some are speculating the portions covering the pachinko and amusement industries will be combined into one new section. Such a change would make it easier for Sega to get involved in the business.

Sega is also reportedly at the heart of a move to establish a new pachinko organization, to be called the Electronic Amusement Equipment Industry Association. They are working together with four other, unnamed companies from a variety of industries. Dentsu, the advertising and market research giant, has already begun a survey of the market, and development is said to be proceeding on a new LCD pachislo (pachinko-slot) machine. Sega's response to all this has been, so far, "no comment."

Waiting for an upturn.

In the arcades, income is off from last spring's numbers by as much as 30% to 40% for many operators. One Osaka-area operator grouched, "With sales falling below last year's level for six straight months, I can't even put in any new games, let alone invest in the upgrade of my facilities. Video games are the backbone of my business; no new hits means no increases in income. I really wonder whether I'm going to see a new hit game, an upswing in the economy, or us going out of business first." Granted, a few locations are experiencing an increase in customers, with sales rising by 20% or even 30%. Despite these occasional bright spots, however, the industry is not seeing even the beginnings of an upturn on the whole. Some of the operators surveyed are of the opinion that they need to focus on riding out the storm, while another suggested using the slowdown to conduct some market research and look over potential sites for opening new arcades when the market turns up again.

The twenty locations surveyed for this month's report show that operators are steadily introducing *Super Street Fighter II Turbo* (Capcom). However, there is no big rush afoot, and operators are easing off on

the genre in general. Regardless, *Super SFII* has been consistently earning good money, and stands near the top of this month's charts, where it stands just below Sega's *Virtua Fighter* and SNK's *Art of Fighting 2*.

With *Fatal Fury Special* (SNK) also scoring well, it is obvious that fighting games do continue to be the big earners in the arcades. One operator said, "*Super SFII Turbo* started out at the 300 plays per day level. We expect it to remain at the top of the rankings, even after we select a difficulty level appropriate to our customers' skills." As for *Virtua Fighter*, a Nagoya-area operator said, "The players are getting used to the controls and are becoming quite adept. We took a big hit, though, when one of our competitors dropped the price per play from ¥200 to ¥100 (\$1.90 to \$0.95)." This suggests that operators will shortly be faced with the need to find new ways to boost income through competitive pricing. Sports, quiz, and puzzle genre games are also competing with some vigor, but in general, the opinion is that, outside of the hits, game income is very unstable. Another response from some operators has been to install old machines.

As for cockpit and upright machines, *Ridge Racer* (Namco) is the clear leader. It has all the earmarks of

becoming a long-runner, but it's difficult to say what effect *Daytona USA* (Sega) will have. On the operators' wish-list for both games is the ability to link two or more together, as such arrangements draw groups into the arcades to both play and watch. There are rumors that a twin-version of *Daytona* is due out this month, and an update of *Virtua Fighter* in July. These should help to keep things moving with this sector of the market.

Innovation a necessity.

Single-site department store locations, geared mostly towards children, remain in a slump. Even the popularity of the once-almighty fighting games is starting to fade. The debut of *Virtua Fighter* has knocked all other comers off the stage. Not all single-sites have felt the effects; the impact seems to be strongest on those game centers in stores near shopping arcades and malls, places with a high concentration of game locations. Although fighting games from all manufacturers are under stress, one manufacturer in particular (who shall remain nameless) has been hit the hardest.

NEW SPOT

< Taito Amusement City >



On January 26th, Taito Corp. opened a new amusement facility in the city of Matsumoto, located in the mountains of Nagano prefecture, where the 1998 Winter Olympics will take place. The facility, called Taito Amusement City, represents the company's vision of an entertainment complex "presenting tomorrow's amusements today."

The building used formerly housed a bowling alley. Total floor space amounts to 4,810 m². The building also plays host to a pachinko parlor and a discount store.

The complex is geared towards attracting female customers, and offers a variety of services and events

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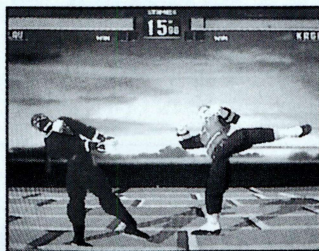
designed to appeal to that audience. As an amusement complex, the entertainment offerings are wide; they include karaoke rooms, snack stands, and a bowling alley.

One-third of the arcade area is dedicated to token games, creating an adult atmosphere. The attractions of the remainder have proven to be a strong draw on families, who crowd the complex on weekends.

Taito has invested approximately ¥540 billion (\$5.1 million) in the project. They are anticipating first-year sales of ¥700 billion (\$6.7 million).

Video game

1. Virtua Fighter (Sega Enterprises)



2. Art of Fighting 2 (SNK)

3. Super Street Fighter II (Capcom)

4. Puyo puyo (Compile/Sega)

5. Fatal Fury Special (SNK)

6. Run & Gun (Konami)

7. Super Street Fighter II Turbo (Capcom)

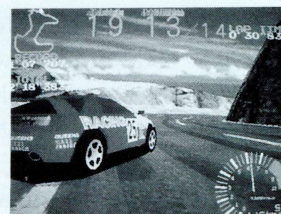
8. Ray Force (Taito)

9. Batugun (Toa Plan)

10. Netto! Gekito! Quizto (Namco)

Cockpit

1. Ridge Racer (Namco)



2. Lethal Enforcers (Konami)

3. Suzuka 8 hours 2 (Namco)

4. Out Runners (Sega)

5. Virtua Racing (Sega)

This company's software was a proven leader in the field, but in the aftermath of *VF*, its popularity seems to have picked up and headed south.

Granted, the appearance of *VF* is not the only reason for the fade away, but it certainly is a major one. The magnetism of the game is putting single-site operators, who can't afford it, through a very painful time. It's virtually a life or death struggle for many. There's no game that can compete on an equal level. However, there are some titles that are still proving to be at least consistent earners. Both *Fatal Fury Special* and *Samurai Shodown* continue to generate good income, and operators are banking on their continued success. *Art of Fighting 2*, another NEO*GEO title, has also gotten off to a good start, and it is hoped that this one will prove to be lasting addition to many arcades.

Yet, there is still concern for those locations who are currently relying heavily on NEO*GEO software to the exclusion of everything else. The decline of *Street Fighter II* left those operators who had placed too much emphasis on that title in dire straits. Although there are some strong quiz and novelty video game titles, they are not especially appropriate for children-oriented locations. As noted earlier, some operators have responded by reviving old games like *Tetris* and *Columns*. Said one used equipment dealer, "I suppose the biggest attraction is the low cost, but these games do help to bring in customers." Likewise, given the

depreciation that has occurred, operators might even find success the second time around on titles that flopped when they first came out. Arcades could make the effort to attract players by offering low price-per-play on these pieces, or announcing a limited period on-site for each such game. In any event, clearly some single-site operators here need to get innovative if they are going to survive.

As to coffee shop arcades, whose main clientele tends to be college students, the decline seems to have eased, and most locations are reporting stable earnings. With spring vacation and the beginning of a new academic year, the customer base is also changing as graduates leave and freshmen enter. Operators will have to wait for things to settle down before they can see if the stability will be maintained. Games proving popular in these locations include such titles as *Puyo Puyo* (Sega). Fighting games, though slowing down, are generating steady income, but a *VF* effect seems likely in the near future for these arcades as well. Sports games are also showing promise. *Run 'n' Gun* (Konami), though not a major hit, is nonetheless proving itself to be a steady earner, and many operators believe it will become a long-runner. Finally, several golf- and soccer-based games are scheduled to be released shortly; perhaps these will provide coffee shop operators with a base as they welcome their new customers to their location. ■

Wonder Eggs Sees 2,000,000th Visitor

Namco's Wonder Eggs theme park saw its total attendance figure hit the two million mark on March 6. The park hit the one million mark in January 1993, 11 months after its February 1992 opening.

In the park's first year, attendance reached approximately 1.11 million, exceeding Namco's projection of 800,000 visitors. The second year likewise exceeded its initial estimate (800,000) by ending the year at approximately 850,000.

Visitor 2,000,000 was a 21-year old university student

named Nishikawa Hiroko.

Ms. Nishikawa, who was visiting the park with three of her friends on a Sunday, received congratulations from Wonder Eggs staff and park officials, as well as a certificate, a lifetime pass, and other prizes.

The milestone was reached as Wonder Eggs was celebrating its second Wonder Easter festival, a multi-day affair that was extended to encompass the park's birthday. The festival, more a

celebration of spring than one of the holy day, was due to end on April 10th. Park officials reported that attendance had been running higher than the 1993 affair. Events held in conjunction with the festival include talent variety shows, quiz competitions, and other contests and parties. □



Sony Technology In Konami Coin-op

Konami Co., Ltd. has announced that they have begun work on a line of commercial game products that will employ the computer graphics technology of Sony Computer Entertainment (SCE). The Sony technology had been developed for use in consumer market video games. Konami plans to release their first products domestically next year.

Konami also holds a 3DO developers license. This would allow Konami to apply that company's standards and technology to a commercial game product if they chose. However, they have decided that the quality of SCE's technology, particularly its computer graphics and VR imaging capabilities, are best suited to their needs.

The company is also planning to build equipment that can be sold overseas by Konami's subsidiaries in the U.S., U.K., and Germany.

A prototype of the domestic version has been assembled, and full production is expected to start shortly. The games will be installed in Konami's directly-managed arcades. It is hoped the new equipment will help set Konami arcades apart from other game locations. □

Jaleco Opens Factory

Jaleco Co., Ltd. has inaugurated a new factory in the city of Oita, located on the western side of the southernmost island of Kyushu. Construction had begun last summer. The company feted the new facility with a party on March 23.

The new plant has a total area of about 8,300 m². It serves as the company's production base for western Japan, and includes substantial warehouse space. Jaleco hopes the facility will play a role in improving service to their customers in the region. □

Increased Production in Europe, China for Sega

Sega Enterprises has announced plans to establish full-scale factories in China and Europe primarily for the manufacture of commercial amusement equipment. The company hopes to switch from exports to local production for nearly all overseas sales in the future.

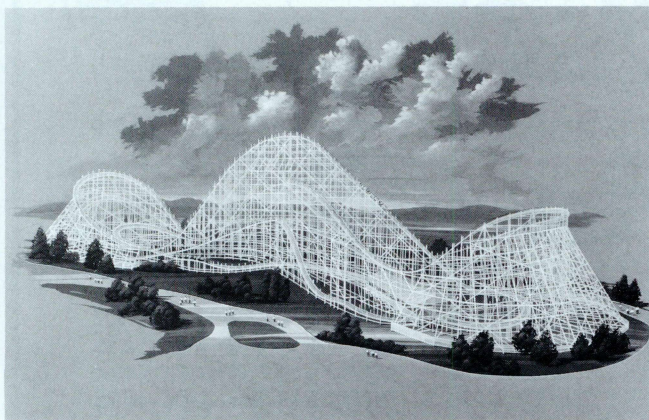
China is seen by many Japanese manufacturers as an ideal country, both for its proximity and lower labor costs. Sega is investigating the possibilities of constructed facilities in or near Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen, the Special Economic Zone over the border from Hong Kong. The company plans to construct companies in all three locations in order to cover the whole of China more effectively.

Wooden Coaster Makes Debut

This past April 9th saw the opening of the first wooden roller coaster in Eastern Japan at the Yomiuri Land amusement park. The coaster makes full use of lateral G-forces to provide its thrills. It also features a complex track layout, and the wood construction adds sways and sounds not found in all-steel productions.

The wood used in the coaster came from the U.S. 15,000 bolts and 90,000 nails were used to put it together. A pull of up to 1.5 Gs is reached in the turns, triple that of a conventional roller coaster. Its maximum rise is 53-degrees, and the rails cant at 50-degrees, both records for Japan.

There are only two other wooden roller coasters in operation in Japan, one in Oita prefecture on Kyushu and the other in Mie prefecture between Osaka and Nagoya. □



Artist's rendition of the Yomiuri Land roller coaster.

In Europe, Sega's factory in Wimbledon just south of London has been handling the product supply for all of Europe. However, with the growth of the European market it is expected that the facility there will be strained to meet the demand. In response, Sega is debating opening factories in Portugal, Italy and eastern Europe in the near future. The company is also planning to assign more personnel to Europe with the aim of tripling production output.

By undertaking these measures, Sega hopes to reduce the amount of work currently contracted out to domestic companies in order to reduce the impact of the high yen. In addition, the use of local facilities will reduce product delivery time.

Finally, Sega has increased the number of contractors handling production chores in the U.S. from three to ten, since companies there can provide reliable high technology goods. Full-scale printed circuit board production is slated to begin in the U.S. this year.

Sega plans to have manufactured about ¥70 billion (\$667 million) worth of products overseas for the quarter that ended in March. □

Sega to Operate Cable Karaoke

Sega Enterprises has announced plans to begin operating a karaoke cable channel in the fourth quarter of this year. The channel will be accessible through use of the company's new 32-bit game machine, Saturn, which is due to be released in Japan this November.

Sega is currently working with Tokyo Cable Network on a cable video game channel in that city. The company hopes to apply this experience to the new project. With the new channel, song software will be loaded into a host computer, and customers will use their Saturn sets as terminals. The system is essentially the same as that being developed in the U.S. for the company's Sega Channel.

In Japan, laser disc karaoke is currently the most widespread form. However, Taito Corp. and Dai-ichi Kosho have introduced ISDN-based telephony products that are gradually earning market share. Furthermore, Osaka Cable Television has also announced plans to introduce a karaoke cable channel as part of its service. It is expected that competition in these areas will increase. □

Sega to Advertise on Shopping Network

Sega Enterprises has purchased spots on a TV home shopping program aired via satellite. Sega's plans were to start marketing their products through the program beginning last month.

Cable is being touted as a promising medium for video game networks and video-on-demand services. Although the TV program does not offer two-way communications, Sega hopes that by using the system at this early stage, they will gain the know-how needed for later developments in the field.

The home shopping program is broadcast on a channel run by the Tokyo-based information services concern Misawa Van. Sega has secured two 30-minute spots per week. The company plans to use their programs to introduce new software titles, as well as to allow customers to order consumer game software and hardware by telephone.

Misawa Van will be handling the production chores. Spots on the channel run ¥1.2 million (\$11,428) per hour. □

Taito Profits Rise Slightly in '93

Taito Corp. has announced preliminary sales figures for the fiscal year that ended March 31. According to the report, released in early March, ordinary profits were estimated to have risen by 13% over fiscal 1992 to ¥6.7 billion (\$63.8 million). However, an adjustment was made in the first half of fiscal 1993 for unrecovered debts that amounted to ¥4.8 billion (\$45.7 million). The resulting loss in operating profits of ¥3.7 million (\$35.2 million) represents an actual decrease of 30% over fiscal 1992.

Total sales were estimated to have reached ¥94 billion (\$895 million), which marks a slight rise over fiscal 1992 though one lower than had been forecast. Although commercial equipment sales were favorable, income from arcade operations was expected to have dropped. It is believed that Taito's increased expenses related to the company's karaoke business, including product development and advertising costs, also had a significant effect on the profits estimate. □

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Banpresto to Manufacture Novelty Games



Banpresto President Yukimasa Sugiura announced on February 17th that the company plans to start producing novelty game hardware. The declaration came at a meeting held in Tokyo that also marked the release of a new plush toy lineup.

In his speech, Mr. Sugiura noted that the company, a subsidiary of the toy manufacturing giant Bandai, had heretofore concentrated their efforts in the genre on manufacturing plush toys. "We plan to release three new prize games over the next few months," he said. "With our recent reorganization of personnel and this new plan, we expect to become a company that's really on the roll."

It is felt by many that the novelty game sector in Japan still offers much opportunity for growth, despite the economic slowdown being experienced by the amusement industry.

With regards to the toys and prizes themselves, sales of premiums hit the 100 million unit mark last year. Company representatives said Banpresto plans to expand the variety of their offerings, including products that could be sold in non-amusement markets. Products will also be developed that use popular television and movie licenses, in addition to the cartoon and comic book themes that have dominated the Banpresto product line to date. New materials, such as taffeta and bean bag pellets, will also be introduced to the company's manufacturing process.

In addition to a wide range of toys based on popular Japan-originated licenses such as Ultraman, Godzilla, and Speed Racer, a few characters from overseas such as the Tiny Toon roster made their appearance in new plush toy products.

This year is the sixth since the company's name was changed to Banpresto. Banpresto's sales are estimated



The latest in summer fashions?

Banpresto displayed a line of more practical goods.



to have been 30% higher this year than last, and the company is aiming for a 60% rise in income this year, driven by new types and categories of premiums. □

Taito Opens New Tokyo Arcade

Taito Corp. opened the Power Game Park arcade on March 10th in a building located next to Ikebukuro Station, a major subway juncture. The two-floor arcade, located on the first and second basement levels, covers 800 m² and features 180 machines.

Power Game Park's target audience is high school and college-age customers. The first basement floor is referred to as the "pop game floor." It is geared to beginners and groups. The second floor, called the "cult game floor," features a mix aimed at experienced game players.

The game center is directly connected to an underground shopping arcade. It is the third store in Taito's Power Game Park chain. Business hours are from 10 a.m. to midnight. □



Sigma Opens Distribution Center

Sigma, Inc., a Tokyo-based token machine manufacturer, has opened a new distribution office in Yamanashi prefecture, just outside of Tokyo. The center, located in the town of Kofu, includes a factory and warehouse facilities.

The center uses a building rented from a local storage company. 1,320 m² of the 6,600-m² space are for factory use, and the remaining area serves as a warehouse. The main business of the center is the assembly of machines and components from goods delivered by Sigma subcontractors.

Sigma hopes to use the Kofu center as a stockyard of sorts, and their main distribution facility in Tokyo as a picking yard. The Kofu warehouse can process up to 1,500 units of equipment per month. The two facilities both lie on the same major Tokyo-area highway artery, making them convenient for surface transportation. Production operations that had been han-



The new Kofu distribution center.

dled at the Tokyo center have been shifted to Kofu. Furthermore, five other warehouses that had been rented in the Tokyo area have been closed.

Sigma expects to reduce expenses 30% by concentrating its operations on the Kofu and Tokyo facilities. They also expect to see their production capacity double. □

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Karaoke Room Seminar Held



Discussing how to make karaoke work.

On March 15, COIN JOURNAL CO., LTD., this magazine's publisher, sponsored a Karaoke Room Management Seminar in the city of Kanuma, about 85 km north of Tokyo. The event was held in cooperation with the Tochigi Prefecture Karaoke Industry Crime Prevention Association.

The karaoke industry has expanded dramatically over the past decade in Japan, thanks to the popularity of karaoke boxes. It is estimated that there are 12,000 locations offering karaoke around the country, adding up to 130,000 rooms.

Although some in the industry feel the karaoke business will continue to enjoy steady growth for the foreseeable future, others believe it has reached a turning point. With the heightened competition, service and equipment upgrades have become keys to continued success. COIN JOURNAL sponsored the seminar in the belief that questions and concerns about the future management needs of karaoke facilities need to be addressed in order to ensure stability in the industry.

Speakers at the seminar were karaoke room operators from around the country who have been successfully operating their businesses with innovative approaches to management. Speakers focused on practical measures and methods to improve operations in their responses to the topics discussed. The basic format of the discussions was an examination of changes in the karaoke industry, and where it is going; how can operators best cope with these changes; and a look at successful examples as a source of information. Seminar topics covered included: introduction of dining facilities to improve business; the techniques of customer satisfaction; and how to maximize your

income.

A number of companies also exhibited their karaoke products at the seminar. These included lighting, statistical evaluation, and interior design products aimed at increasing the amount of time a customer spends in the karaoke room. Other displayed materials included promotional aids, telephony-based karaoke equipment, and food and beverage items. □

Sampling karaoke products.



Jaleco Europe Relocates

A reminder: Jaleco Europe moved to new offices last winter. The new address is as follows: 188 Brent Crescent; North Circular Road; London LW10 0QT; England. Telephone: +44-81-838-4600; fax: +44-81-838-4515. □



Jaleco Europe's new office.

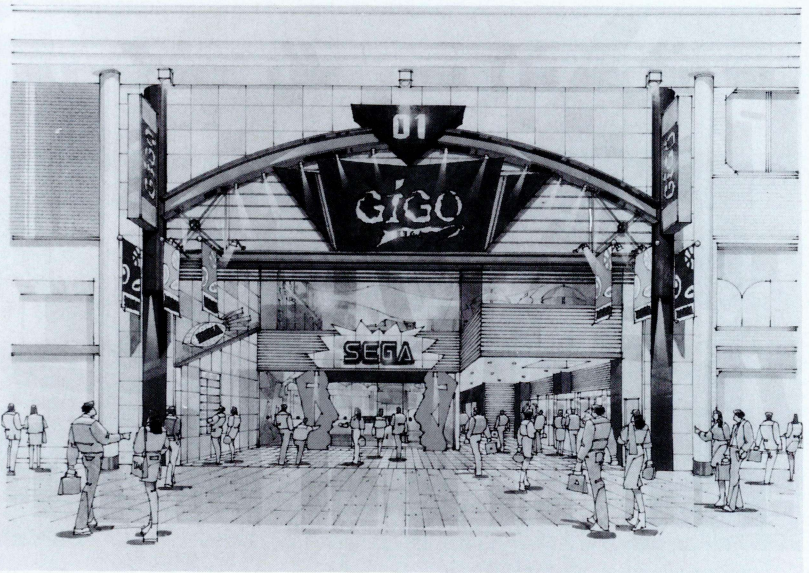
Gigo Arcade Opens in Hiroshima

Sega Enterprises was scheduled to open a new arcade in its Gigo chain in the city of Hiroshima at the end of March. With an area of 2,343 m², it would be the largest arcade in the region.

The facility houses 245 machines. These include new releases such as *Daytona USA* and *Jurassic Park*. The game mix encompasses 55 video games, 65 token games, and 40 simulator-type machines.

The Gigo arcade occupies the first four floors of a six-story entertainment complex. The complex has been defined as a "sports festival hall," which has been reflected in the interior design and the installed games. Additionally, each floor of the arcade has also been themed; the first floor is called "Field," the second "Circuit," the third "Arena," and the fourth "Club House."

Karaoke rooms are planned for the 5th and 6th floors, and the basement is slated to become a restaurant floor. Ground breaking for the basement facilities



is scheduled for this summer.

The initial investment for the Hiroshima Gigo came to approximately ¥1 billion (\$9.5 million). First year sales are anticipated to be ¥1 billion. The arcade is open from 10 a.m. to midnight. ■

Second-hand game machines also boost the distributors' market!!

Once this amusement business has begun, The keystone to management success is to use a combination of old and new machines and new PCBS and products from various manufacturers, rather than just relying on new products and one manufacturer.

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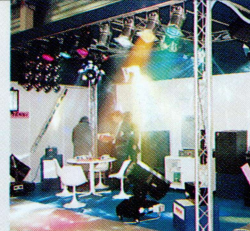
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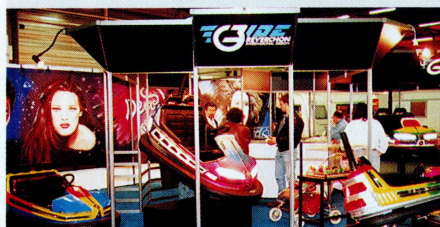
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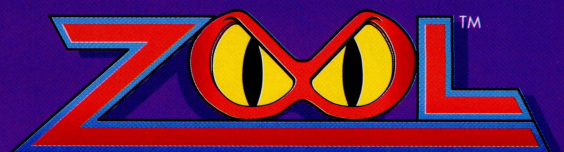
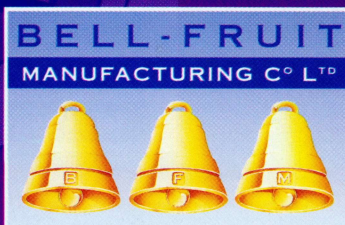
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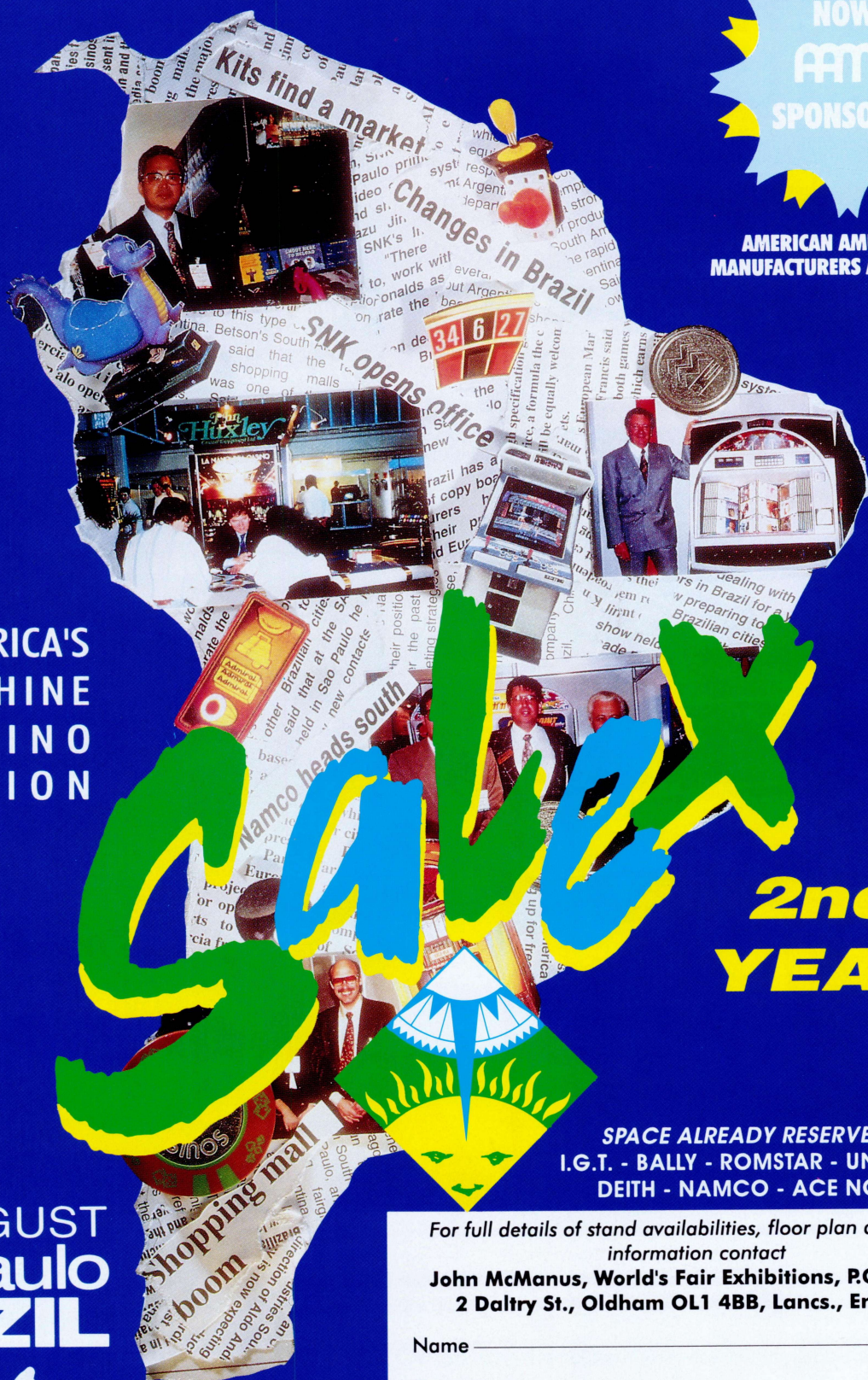
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CONSIDER KARAOKE

The Japanese karaoke industry recently witnessed a very important court ruling over a controversial copyright issue. The question at hand: should companies that lease karaoke equipment to bars and other karaoke establishments also bear responsibility for the karaoke copyright? And, as a consequence of their use of that copyright, do they have to pay royalties on the songs used? The court ruled that yes, they should. This month, we take at karaoke operators' view of the issue.

With all the changes in technology and the increasing ease with which copyrighted material can be mass-produced or duplicated through the application of that technology, it should come as no surprise that the question of how to protect copyrights is becoming more important. Certainly the video game industry has experienced its share of copyright problems, and with the growth of computer networks it is becoming easier to duplicate and transmit copyrighted works illegally by wire.

The music industry has likewise been faced with a host of issues tied to the birth of new media and new ways of making music. The use of music samples, most prominently in rap, has been a much debated issue in the U.S., for example. In the case of Japan, karaoke has been the focus of debate over the copyright issue. It is not the production of karaoke versions of songs that is being discussed, however; it is the actual playing of the material and questions of royalty payments raised by that use. In a recent case in the Osaka District Court, a judge ruled that commercial karaoke users do indeed have to pay.

The case at hand was initiated by the Japan Society for the Rights of Authors, Composers, and Publishers (JASRAC), roughly equivalent to the U.S. ASCAP. JASRAC sued an Osaka karaoke bar and a karaoke equipment rental company, arguing that "the use of karaoke equipment and performances for commercial purposes without permission constitutes a violation of the copyright that JASRAC holds. Therefore, the defendants must pay JASRAC royalties for the use of the music." The defendants' response to this argument was to point out that the laws pertaining to karaoke copyrights contain many inconsistencies, and that they were under no obligation to make payments of any kind.

The judge's ruling was handed down on February 17th. It broke new ground in that it marked the first time in which karaoke rental companies were also

deemed subject to the provisions of copyright laws. All previous cases focused on the end-users, the karaoke bars and lounges. By this extension of the scope of the law, one might even say that the whole of the karaoke industry is caught up in this knotty issue.

The case stemmed from the revision of the laws covering musical copyrights in 1987. Under the new provisions, all karaoke bars, lounges, and other establishments



JASRAC's office building in Tokyo.

that use karaoke equipment have to apply to JASRAC for permission to operate karaoke in their facility. They must also pay royalties. The amount of the royalties is determined on the basis of the location's floor area, and is applicable to any bar with an area greater than 16 m². The amount of duties owed ranges from ¥3,000 (\$28) to ¥10,000 (\$95).

At the time of the revision, there were approximately 500,000 establishments operating karaoke throughout Japan, running the gamut from small lounges and bars to karaoke boxes. The total number of customers stood at about 30 million, representing a sales base of ¥300 billion (\$2.9 billion). The revision caught the karaoke operators by surprise, and they were, as one might expect, not happy with the change. They alleged that JASRAC and an unnamed restaurant association had maneuvered behind the scenes to enact the revision, without consulting them.

The karaoke operators presented five arguments in opposition to the revision. First, people who sing karaoke do so spontaneously. They are amateurs who don't expect to be paid, and therefore karaoke isn't covered by copyright law. Next, the royalties

for the use of karaoke software are usually paid at the point of production on the assumption that the software manufacturer is making them for commercial purposes. Therefore, if

karaoke operators paid royalties, it would amount to paying duties twice over. Third, they argued that the actual procedure for revising the law is itself vague. Fourth, the calculation of royalties is also ambiguous. Finally, given that the

"[A] number of operators have had to sell their bars to pay the fines."

actual use of karaoke in each location varies, and is not directly connected to floor area, the use of such a calculation would be unfair. (It is interesting to note that the phrasing of the last argument would

seem to indicate acceptance with the argument that the operators should pay a royalty or fee of some sort.)

Because of this opposition from a broad group of operators, J A S R A C

experienced difficulties in getting them to agree to contracts including such provisions and in making them pay fees. As a result, the organization resorted to legal measures and took defiant establishments to court, including the one that was the defendant in the February ruling. The karaoke bars that have lost their cases were fined ¥5 million (\$47,600) on average, including legal fees. It is reported that a number of these operators have had to sell their bars in order to pay the fines.

Though JASRAC won a number of suits, it wasn't enough to convince the operators that they ought to be paying royalties, and it had difficulties in collecting them. This being the case, JASRAC broadened their attack to include karaoke rental companies, saying that these companies also shared the responsibility of paying royalties. This change of strategy clearly represented an attempt to break the deadlock, and the rental companies added their voices to the opposition. The rental companies fought back by alleging that they had at one time offered their assistance to JASRAC in collecting royalties, an offer that was declined, and that JASRAC had no right to ask them for royalties now.



At this point, it might be worth it to look at some of the statistics involved. As of 1987, JASRAC received royalties for music copyrights totaling ¥36.8 billion (\$350 million). This includes all uses of music from any genre. Starting in 1988, the association also began to receive karaoke-related royalties; their annual royalty figures have increased by approximately ¥10 billion (@\$95 million) per year since then. By 1993, their annual royalties receipts totaled ¥75 billion (\$710 million). While the growth of the music industry attributed to some of this, the tremendous expansion of the karaoke industry also had an important role in it as well, a fact JASRAC acknowledges.

It is estimated that if every karaoke operation in Japan was in compliance with JASRAC's stipulation, the royalties generated from this field alone would amount to ¥35 billion (\$330 million) per year. Many karaoke operators do not

"[I]n the end, JASRAC might not see money from anyone at all."

think it appropriate that they should be made to bear such a heavy burden, one that amounts to approximately half of the organization's annual income. By comparison, the cable radio industry generates ¥700 to ¥800 million (\$6.67 to

\$7.6 million) per year. Karaoke operators view this statistic and then wonder why, for the use of the same material, they should be paying such heavier costs.

The karaoke rental company subject to the February ruling has said, based on the arguments outlined above, that they will appeal it. In the meantime, JASRAC is expected to demand royalties from the two defendants in the case. Many karaoke operators feel that, should JASRAC's case be upheld, it could be quite injurious to the industry. If they are forced to sell their businesses in order to pay fines, they say, then in the end JASRAC might not see money from anyone at all. ■

NEW PRODUCTS AND NEW TECHNOLOGY

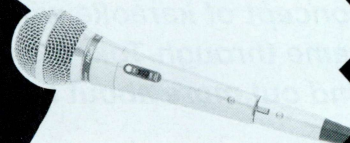
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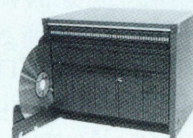
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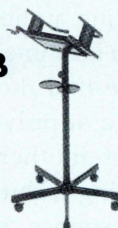
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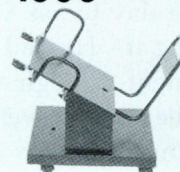
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SPECIAL
INTERVIEW
...

Mr. Larry Richenstein
President
Lonestar Technologies, Inc.

Interview by Carl Freire

Lonestar Technologies, Ltd. of Hicksville, New York is a company that has been on the move. In 1993, they ushered in their Super K audio cassette karaoke format to great acclaim and big sales, and this year they present a new twist on the whole concept of karaoke with a device they simply call the Key. President Larry Richenstein came through Tokyo on business this past March, so JAM talked to him by telephone to find out more about Lonestar and get his views on the state of the U.S. karaoke market.

JAM: Please give us background information about your company. How did you get started?

MR. RICHENSTEIN: I started Lonestar Technologies about eight and a half years ago at the end of 1985. We started out selling audio equipment. We got into karaoke because of a customer who called me one day to ask whether we had thought about carrying it. He had acquired a supply of karaoke equipment through a buyout of another company's stockpile, and did very well selling it through a cable shopping network. My first response was to laugh and say, "No way!" You have to remember this around 1988, before people had really even heard of karaoke here in the U.S.

Still, I thought about it for a while and decided to give it a try. We arranged for a company to manufacture some equipment for us and advertised it on a local cable shopping channel. To our surprise, it sold pretty well. Cable got the ball rolling, but what really convinced us was when we were finally able to get it into the retailers distribution network.

At the moment, we have thirty people working for us. We do not do research and development in-house; we hire out subcontractors for that. We also have a sales office in Hong Kong. Karaoke isn't our only business. We acquired the rights to use the name Western Union in 1993 for a line of telephony products that we expect to release within the next year.

JAM: What karaoke products do you handle? Do you produce software as well as hardware?

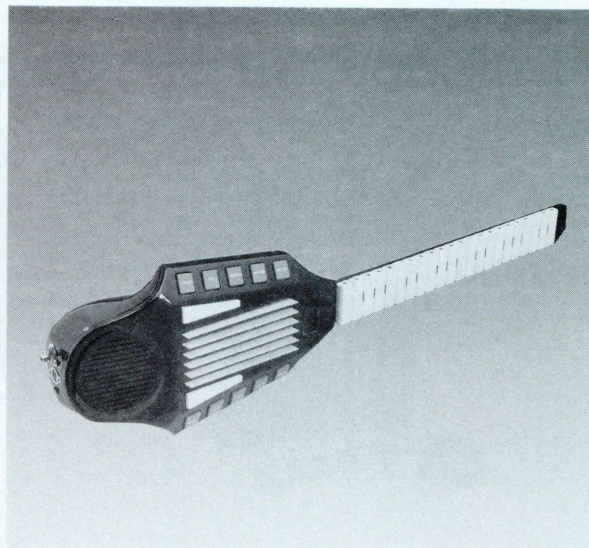
MR. RICHENSTEIN: We tried doing software for a brief period, but we realized that the field is not for us. The first machine that we handled was a cassette-based unit, and we have concentrated our efforts on that format. We do not handle either CD- or LD-based karaoke. The latest change to our karaoke hardware lineup has been the introduction of Super K karaoke, a format we brought out at the 1993 Winter CES. The response to the product has been tremendous, and we haven't been able to keep up with the demand.

With Super K karaoke, the user connects their Super K equipment to their television set, and then the song lyrics appear on the screen. Cassette tapes have four tracks on them. On the normal cassette, two tracks are used for side A and two for side B. Super K tapes are one-sided; two tracks are used for the music and the remaining two carry the data for the lyrics. Each tape has ten or twelve songs in it. Half are versions of a song with the lead vocals in place, and half are formatted for karaoke. Last year, we were selling our Super K series for prices in the \$179 to \$249 range, and this year we plan to release a product that should retail at \$149.

Our other new product is the Key. I view the market for the Key as being kids from 15 to 50. One problem that people have had with karaoke in the U.S., men in particular, is shyness about getting up in front of people and singing. A lot of guys think of singing as something either for professionals or women and wouldn't dream of trying to sing in public. On the other hand, a lot of guys do like to play air guitar. They get involved in the music by pretending they're Eric Clapton or whoever. This ranges from teenagers to people around my age — I'm 40 — and above who grew up with rock music and would like to participate somehow. It takes time to learn an instrument; you have to practice a lot if you want to sound like Clapton! With the Key, you don't have to take lessons. You simply plug and play.

JAM: How does the Key work?

MR. RICHENSTEIN: The Key has a body and fretboard similar to a guitar. Each of the frets has a key that you press to produce a sound. The primary use of the product is for play-along, but it can also be used as a stand-alone synthesizer by the experienced musician or experimenting amateur. The body is equipped with a CD-ROM drive, so the customer buys CDs that have been encoded for the Key and inserts them. The coding on the CD tells the instrument what key the song is in, and provides it with the chords, the lead or melody line, and the bass part. The instrument has a built-in amplifier and speaker. The player can opt to start the CD and then play along with the music



For the karaoke air guitarist, the Key.

as it is, or they can cancel out, say, the lead and play that themselves. The notes on the frets are not constant in the play-along mode; in essence, any fret is the right one.

We gave the Key its official debut at this past Winter CES show. We have already signed agreements with Atlantic and Geffen to produce software using artists from their catalogues that is formatted for the instrument. We are expecting to release the Key bundled with software in the U.S. this June. We are also planning to develop peripherals for the product, but nothing is ready yet.

JAM: What is the state of the karaoke market in the U.S. these days? It seems as though the focus of attention is shifting to the consumer market.

MR. RICHENSTEIN: We don't do any business on the commercial end, so it would be hard for me to judge or make comparisons. The commercial market still seems to be growing. I think people now know what karaoke is; it's just a matter of getting them to check it out. I hope that the Key gets people interested who otherwise might have stayed away.

As for the consumer business, yes, it is growing rapidly, but not as fast as it could be. The problem with karaoke up to now is that it has been a "fourth quarter business." Retailers will carry karaoke products in the months leading up to Christmas only. What we have to do now is convince them to carry it for the rest of the year as well, and convince the public that karaoke is more than just a great gift idea.

JAM: What type of hardware has been most prevalent in the consumer business?

MR. RICHENSTEIN: Cassette-based equipment. I would say that about 90% of the karaoke consumer products out there are audio cassette goods. It's a simple matter of economics. CD karaoke seems to be picking up, but I don't think CD+G karaoke is having



The latest in the Super K line, the SK-103, begins shipping next month. Lonestar is targeting a U.S. retail price of \$150.

all that much of an impact, at least not yet. Laser discs aren't really moving at all, again because of prices. Most people who are buying laser disc players are either relatively well-off or are serious movie fans. This is a very small audience.

JAM: A number of companies have personal computer karaoke products out. What do you think the prospects are for this area?

MR. RICHENSTEIN: When I first heard that these things were coming out, I thought it was a great idea and got really excited about it. But there are some basic problems that will have to be faced up to if the idea is going to work. Assuming our customers are representative of the karaoke singing public, most of the people who sing karaoke in the U.S. are women. On the other hand, most of the people who own PCs are men.

Another problem is that many karaoke fans like the portability of the equipment that is available today, the boom boxes and such. When they go over to their friends' houses, they can carry the boom box with them and sing karaoke at home with them. You can't do that with a PC! While I don't think these are problems that can't be overcome, I do think the manufacturers need to think about their marketing strategies a little bit more.

JAM: Speaking of marketing strategies, what do you feel needs to be done if karaoke is to become an accepted entertainment alternative by a broad range of the American public?

MR. RICHENSTEIN: The most important thing that needs to be done in the consumer market is to make products that are affordable. A lot of equipment is priced too high for what people are willing to pay. If the prices drop, then I think many would-be customers who are wavering on the edge will decide to spend their money on karaoke. In the bars and

such, there's not all that much that you can do specifically. It's simply a matter of getting people into the bar where they can actually see and experience karaoke. Again, we are hoping that the Key will prove to be another attraction that will get people in and will make them want to try out karaoke. We hope it will broaden the audience. In order to get the Key out to more locations, we are currently negotiating with Pioneer to have them serve as a distributor. That, incidentally, may also lead to other projects with Pioneer in the future.

JAM: What about your overseas business plans? You're stopping off here in Japan on your way to Hong Kong...

MR. RICHENSTEIN: I'm making this trip primarily to promote the Key. I don't see Super K as a viable format here in Asia, but I think the Key may have possibilities. I've been talking to a few companies here in Japan about getting distribution and sales support, as well as making software for the format. The karaoke companies we've talked to have been very enthusiastic about the Key. They see it as a way to bring something new to karaoke, because it would let their customers "play" with the original artists rather than with a cover version.

As for other areas, we have sold some equipment to customers in Canada and Mexico, but not much. I would say that the Canadian karaoke market is about two years behind that of the U.S., while Mexico is fairly quiet. The big problem there is the lack of software. Some companies are working on developing their Mexican catalogues, so we may see some more activity there in the near future. With regards to Europe, we've gotten a few inquiries about Super K products, and plan to launch the Key there next year.

JAM: Finally, what do you see happening in the U.S. market over the coming year?

MR. RICHENSTEIN: In 1994, I expect we will see karaoke hardware sales exceeding 1.5 million units per year in the U.S. I believe there will be continued confusion in the market over CD-related products. There are a lot of people out there who still do not have CD players, and CD+G karaoke is not enough of a reason to make them want to switch from LPs and cassettes. On the other hand, cassette-based karaoke will continue to dominate the market, and the laser disc business might seem some expansion as well. By 1995, however, we're probably going to see the dust settle around the CD field, and some 5" disc format — not necessarily CD+G — will become the mainstay. And, finally, I think we will see a lot of Key-coded software by that time as well. There's a lot of guys out there who haven't been convinced that singing is the way to go; with this guitar-like device, I'm confident we're going to see a lot of them change their minds about karaoke. ■



Beijing: Karaoke's New Dynasty

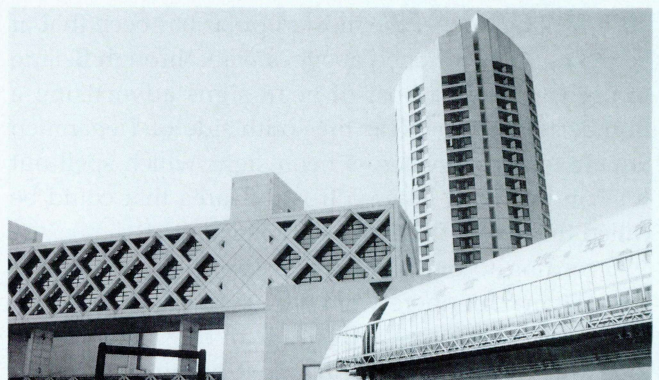
At the beginning of March, JAM paid a visit to Beijing, the political and cultural capital of China. In the intervening period since the Tienanmen Square slaughter, the Chinese economy has taken off. The cities of Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen have seen phenomenal growth, and whatever political problems remain, the economy continues to move ahead at full steam. At night, Beijing may remind some of Las Vegas, with neon signs lighting a large variety of shops.

In the realm of karaoke entertainment, KTV lounges have proliferated around the country. There are also some other karaoke trends noticed in Beijing that bear watching. Herein, we take a look at what is rapidly becoming one of the world's largest karaoke markets.

When the crackdown on the pro-democracy demonstrators occurred in the summer of 1989, it appeared that conservative elements within the Chinese government had scored a major victory over the reform movement that was then sweeping the nation. However, despite the hardening of attitudes on the political front, China was moving in the opposite direction economically. "Revolution" and "Opening" were the two key words used in regards to the formulation and execution of economic policies by the Communist Party. In the wake of the crackdown, the average yearly growth rate for all of China was around 15%, with some cities such as Shanghai registering a phenomenal 24% growth rate last year. Although things have begun to slow down recently and the average growth rate has dropped to around 12% nationwide, there is still a determination on the part of Chinese people to continue to grow as much as possible.

No one who's been to China recently can deny that

great progress has been made in a short period in the economic realm. At the same time, China is slowly beginning to open up more culturally as well. The Cultural Revolution of the 1960s is, for the younger generations anyway, a thing of the past, and foreign music, art, foods, and yes, video games, are growing in popularity. The door through which much foreign culture comes is that of Hong Kong. From there, it



travels to Guangzhou and Shenzhen, and then heads north to Shanghai. Finally, these outside influences reach Beijing.

Before going further, a simple profile of China's capital may be in order. The city has a population of approximately 9.3 million, making it the second largest city in the country after Shanghai (14 million). Its history is one of the longest of any city in the world, extending back for almost 500,000 years. Since the 1949 revolution, it has upstaged Shanghai as the most important city in the country.

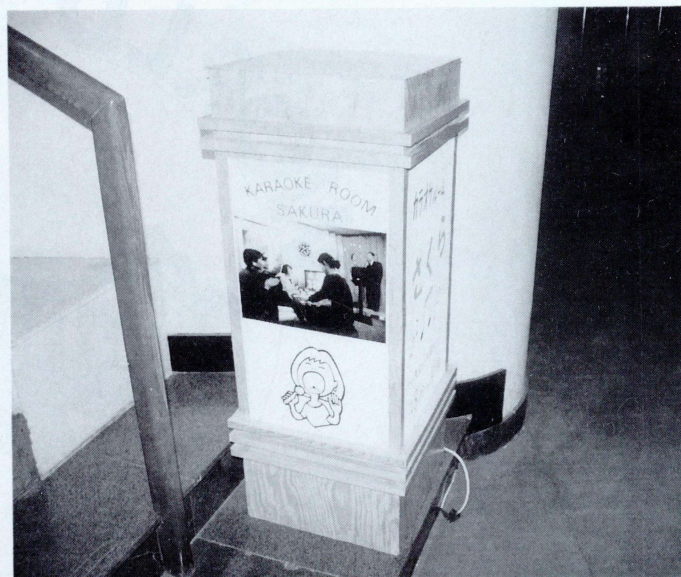
Beijing is a city of large streets and wide boulevards, but tucked away are also many little sidestreets selling traditional goods. With the exception of hotels and some public facilities, most of the architecture predates the 1949 revolution. The way the people in the streets are dressed reflects the generational and economic differences, as one sees a mixture of modern western fashions and traditional Mao jackets and caps.

Despite the expansion of the economy, the average monthly income remains quite low, around \$7.50 per month. It should also be remembered that an apartment with utilities costs only around \$1.00 a month. At the same time, more expensive apartment complexes are being constructed, and as income levels continue to rise, more and more people will no doubt be able to afford such exclusive housing.



Amongst the many forms of entertainment to take off in Beijing, one of the most popular has been that of karaoke. As mentioned above, a walk through Beijing at night reveals a host of neon signs advertising a number of shops. Near the south side of Tiananmen Square, one comes across neon signs which spell out KTV in big, bold letters. It is this area that could be called the heart of Beijing's karaoke district.

According to one person familiar with the Chinese karaoke market, there were only a grand total of four karaoke locations in Beijing at the time of the Tiananmen Square Incident. That number increased to 50 shortly afterwards, and today there are some-



where between 200 and 300 such establishments. In one hotel, a karaoke room called Sakura has been built as part of a joint venture with a Japanese company. The manager of the club said that while a lot of karaoke establishments have sprung up of late, the market is not yet saturated and there is room for even more. As Beijing has grown almost to the extent of Shanghai, where there are now approximately 2,000 KTV lounges in operation, it stands to reason that there is room for the same kind of growth for KTV lounges in Beijing. It may also be of interest to note that Sakura, one of the most popular establishments, is really more of what would be called a karaoke lounge in Japan, as it does not have individual rooms. In Beijing, these kinds of karaoke lounges constitute the greater majority of karaoke establishments.

The day JAM visited Sakura, they were extra busy. Arriving at about 8 p.m., the place was already full, and there was a one hour wait for a table. A total of 40 customers were enjoying themselves. It is also important to note that almost all of the customers were Japanese expatriates. Small snacks were available for those who wanted something to munch on,

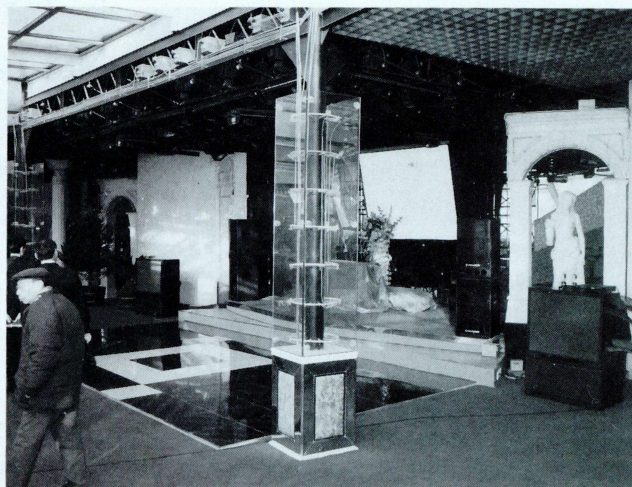


while beer was could be had for around \$5.00 a bottle. Including the karaoke, each customer spends an average of \$75.00 for the evening. According to an employee, the average karaoke lounge in Beijing costs around 400 yuan (\$50.00) per person. Of course, at these prices, it is absolutely impossible for the average working Chinese to visit one of these places. The few Chinese who do come to Sakura tend to be either wealthy entrepreneurs or those work for foreign corporations and receive a substantially higher salary.

The club has a wide variety of songs. As might be expected by the clientele, a large number of these are in Japanese. These consist primarily of popular songs. On the other hand, there are a large number of Chinese language songs as well.

Of course, Sakura is actually the exception rather than the rule. In order for karaoke to succeed, it has to be made available to the general public. In addition, clubs that cater to Japanese and Chinese will, for a variety of reasons, probably not be as successful as clubs that attempt to attract only Chinese customers. The manager who runs Sakura realizes this and has invested \$2 million in a three-room addition to attract more Chinese customers. He said that part of the reason for this decision was due to the fact that other karaoke lounges in Beijing cater to a specific kind of customer. Opening a lounge that served both Chinese and Japanese would be a major mistake, he said. "People from different countries have different ways of enjoying themselves and different interests. Having Japanese and Chinese people sitting at the same bar together is to invite trouble."

One of the more unusual karaoke locations anywhere is in Beijing – a karaoke location inside a jet airplane. Of course, the interior has been completely renovated, and there are six karaoke rooms, with another 8 planned soon. Each room is around 15m², and can accommodate 7 or 8 people. Of course, the cost is quite expensive; the average person spends around \$250 per visit.



In their efforts to promote karaoke, several Japanese companies have been promoting karaoke conferences to assist those in the Chinese industry. Recently, JHC Corp. held just such a conference in cooperation with the Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association. 1,700 people attended. With a population of 1.2 billion, it is quite obvious that the potential of China remains vast, and that karaoke, especially in Beijing has a major role to play. As China continues to move towards a more market-oriented economy, and as more and more different kinds of foreign culture find a place in China, karaoke as well stands poised to become a huge business. ■

Beijing

- **Population:** 9.3 million
- **Government:** Socialist
- **Average GNP:** \$30.00/month
- **Exchange Rate:** \$1.00 = 8 yuan*

* Exchange rate as of March, 1994

Pioneer

Karaoke Hardware Guide

CDJ-500

The trend towards size reduction in consumer electronics continues apace, and the karaoke and DJ business is no exception to the rule. Indeed, given that many DJs operate a mobile business, they offer a ready-made market for anyone who wants to find a way to lighten their load. Pioneer Electronic Corporation has come up with a CD player that just might do that for them, the CDJ-500.

For all intents and purposes, CD players come in two flavors. You can either go with the rack-sized unit housed in a body the size of your average piece of stereo equipment, or you can opt for the carry-along Discman arrangement. The problem is what to do if you are a professional who needs to be able to cue up music the way you would on a turntable, but still need something compact and easy to carry.

Pioneer Electronic Corporation has an answer, and it's called the CDJ-500. This new CD player has been designed specifically with the professional in mind, with features that heretofore had been largely constrained to turntables. For starters, it comes with a jog dial to jog the CD back and forth so the DJ can find the precise point from which they want a particular track to begin. Once the user has selected their starting point, they then have the option of using the Auto Cue or Manual Cue, depending on the exact instant at which they want the music to begin. Lag time between pressing the play button and the music beginning

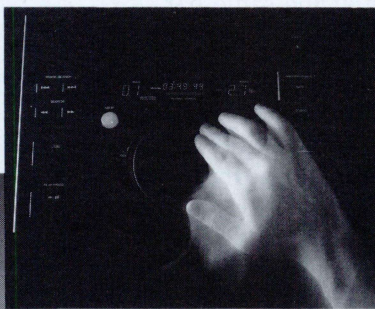
has also been reduced with CDJ-500's quick start capability.

Other features include a tempo control, the ability to have the CD play short loops of music, and an easy-to-read playing address. The unit has been ergonomically designed, and all controls have been placed on the top of the unit so it can be manipulated like a conventional turntable.

If you need a professional's CD player for your karaoke or mobile DJ show, then contact your local Pioneer distributor or Pioneer itself at one of the addresses listed in the advertisement in this magazine.



CDJ-500



KARAOKE SOFTWARE

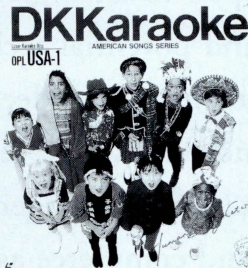
RELEASE LIST

The Karaoke business is now gaining ground in countries all over the world and the introduction of new software is indispensable. However, the amount of software sold up until now has been rather limited. Listed below we offer you a general outline of the types of software that are available.

■ **KEY** ■ **L**=Laser Disk **C**=CD Graphics **V**=Video Cassette **1**Title **2**Number of titles **3**Number of songs per title **4**Total number of songs **5**Main sales area **6**Purchasing agent **7**Special Characteristics

DAIICHI KOSHO CO., LTD.

- ① DK KARAOKE
- ② **L** ● OPL series: Korea-44, U.S.A.-12, Taiwan-2, Philippines-10, China-4 ● DKV series: U.S.A-22, ● MAL series: Indonesia-9, Thailand-9, Hong Kong-3, Viet Nam-2, Malaysia-6, Korea-9, U.S.A.-12, Taiwan-58, Philippines-10 **C** ● MAG series: U.S.A.-5, Indonesia-10, Taiwan-4, Malaysia-6, Thailand-4 ● OPG series: Korea-20 ● DKG series: U.S.A.-77
- ③ **L** ● OPL: 30 songs (Taiwan-28) ● DKV: 30 songs ● MAL: 13 ~30 songs **C** ● MAG: 12 songs (U.S.A., Taiwan-16) ● OPG: 15 songs ● DKG: 18 songs
- ④ **L** 6,030 **C** 2,130
- ⑤ North America, Asia, Europe
- ⑥ Can purchase directly from headquarters, overseas agents or local distributors.
- ⑦ All songs digitally recorded. Song lyrics are both easy to see and easy to sing. Beautiful, relaxing images add to the songs enjoyment and provide the songs with original images. You can select from a wide variety of your favorite songs.



JVC (Japan Victor Corp.)

- ① JVC CDG KARAOKE
- ② **C** U.S.A.-60, Taiwan-52, Thailand 20, Indonesia 20, Korea-40, Malaysia 6, Japan-40
- ③ For the American market-10, Other-16
- ④ About 3,000 songs.
- ⑤ North America, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Japan, etc.
- ⑥ JVC local dealers (Initial sales will be centered on electrical appliance dealers.).
- ⑦ Low priced CD-G karaoke software. Perfect for pubs, bars, and home parties. In addition song lyrics can be superimposed on a video screen by use of VCR.



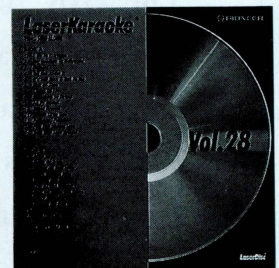
NIKKODO CO., LTD.

- ① BMB KARAOKE
- ② **L** ● LAV series: English-7, Hong-Kong-14, Thai-20, Spanish-1, Philippines(Tagalog)-5, Korean-44, Korean Chapel-1 ● PLD series: Taiwan(Fujianshengese and Peijinese)-86, Indonesian-10 ● MLD series: Taiwan songs with multi-audio function-10 ● KLD series: China-28 ● ILAV series: Italian-1 ● FLAV series: French-1 ● ALAV series: Argentina Tango-1 ● VLAV series: Vietnam-3 ● GLD series: Gospel-1 **C** ● SAV series: Korean-44, Philippines(Tagalog)-3, Spanish-3, English-20, Country Music-5, Gospel-1 ● NCG series: Child-1, X'mas-1
- ③ **L** 28 songs (30 French and Korean chapel songs) **C** 19 songs
- ④ **L** 6,426 songs **C** 1,465 songs
- ⑤ U.S.A., Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Latin America, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines and throughout Asia, Also Spain and other European countries.
- ⑥ All Nikkodo's subsidiaries, branch offices, and agents
- ⑦ A large number of popular and standard songs in a multitude of languages make Nikkodo a leader in international software. Attention is paid to the development of high sound and graphic quality.



PIONEER LDCA, INC.

- [1] NTSC versions
- ① WKL series
- ② **L** ● Regular selections-43, Special series UK Hits-10, Spanish-2, Country Folk songs-7, Gospel-1 Christmas/Nursery-1
- ③ 28 songs
- ④ 1,792 songs
- ⑤ North America, Asia and partly Europe
- [2] PAL versions
- ① WKL series
- ② **L** ● Regular series: Spanish-11, German-8, Italian-8 Dutch-7, French-5 ● Best selections (English)-16
- ③ 28 songs except French of 14 songs
- ④ 1,470 songs
- ⑤ Europe
- ⑥ Purchase through those dealers of the company's software including record, instrument, and karaoke specialty shops.
- ⑦ Systematic karaoke which boasts a high graphic and sound quality and which is made in America. It is characterized by abundant song repertoires of everything from old songs to Michael Jackson to Madonna.



TECHNICAL & MODERNITY, INC.

- ① VOCOMOTION
- ② **L** 21 **V** 5
- ③ **L** 28 **V** 6
- ④ **L** 588 **V** 30
- ⑤ U.S.A., Canada, England.
- ⑥ **L** In America and Canada: Technical & Modernity, Inc. Elsewhere: T & M Co., Ltd.
- ⑦ Hit songs from the 1950's through the 1980's specially planned and compiled for overseas users. The wide variety of songs, everything from Country & Western music to Rock, adds enjoyment to any party.



The 1st Pacific American Karaoke Business Conference

Sept. 25-28

Palm Springs, California

The Pacific American Karaoke (PAK) Business Conference is a gathering of major hardware and software manufacturers, service producers and karaoke marketers throughout North America and other Pacific Rim countries. The goal of the Conference is to create a coordinated opportunity for East and West to meet under optimum circumstances to form strategic alliances, explore new technologies, and cultivate the future of the international marketplace.

The PAK Business Conference will be open to all organizations, public and private, with a vested interest in existing and potential technologies utilized in karaoke/sing-along products and entertainment. Attendees will include OEM manufacturers and distributors, software and multiactive technology producers, licensing organizations, import/export brokers and managers, media duplicating services, music and video producers, trade and commerce associations and other such groups or companies which desire a powerful, inside look at the structure and future of international karaoke.

Make plans now to attend the PAK conference. During the three-day conference, the industry's leading professionals will offer a number of seminars on pertinent issues faced by all within the karaoke industry.

For more information, contact:

Ron Arnone

American Karaoke Magazine

19528 Ventura Boulevard #508

Tarzana, California 91356 USA

Tel: 1-818-708-7400

Fax: 1-818-708-8197

Summer

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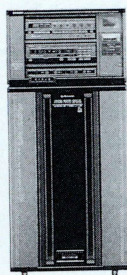
**McCormick Convention Center
Chicago, Illinois
June 23-25, 1994**

*Sponsored, produced, and managed by
Electronic Industries Association*

For registration information, contact the EIA
at:
Tel: +1-202-457-8700
Fax: +1-202-457-4901

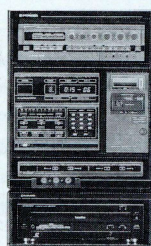
USED KARAOKE SYSTEM

FOR SALE!!
ORIGINAL
MADE IN JAPAN



**LC-V50 SYSTEM
(PIONEER)**

- STEREO MIXING AMPLIFIER
 - AUTO CHANGER COMMANDER/CO-V50
 - VIDEO DISC AUTO CHANGER/LC-V50
(SOFT WARE not included)
- CAPACITY▶LASER DISC 144PCS



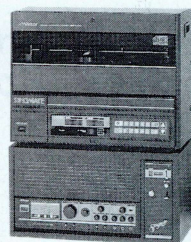
**CAC-V1 SYSTEM
(PIONEER)**

- STEREO MIXING AMPLIFIER/SAV-20II
 - AUTO CHANGER COMMANDER/CCO-V1
 - VIDEO DISC AUTO CHANGER/CAC-V1
(SOFT WARE not included)
- CAPACITY▶COMPACT DISC 300pcs



**CDK-7700 SYSTEM
(SONY)**

- STEREO MIXING AMPLIFIER
WITH AUTO CHANGER COMMANDER/CDK-7700A
 - COIN PUSHER
 - VIDEO DISC AUTO CHANGER/CDK-7700P
(SOFT WARE not included)
- CAPACITY▶COMPACT DISC 180PCS



**DH610,611 SYSTEM
(VICTOR)**

- STEREO MIXING AMPLIFIER/AXK-55
 - VIDEO DISC AUTO CHANGER/DH610
 - EXTRA VIDEO DISC AUTO CHANGER/DH611
(SOFT WARE not included)
- CAPACITY▶COMPACT DISC 150pcs
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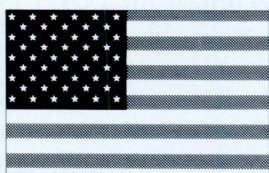
我公司擁有講各種語言的職員，歡迎隨時與我們通電聯系。

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KARAOKE WORLD NEWS



U.S.A.

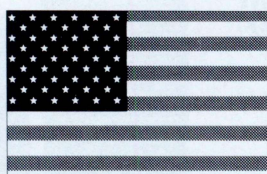
Nikkodo Releases Mega Star Software

Nikkodo U.S.A., Inc. announces the launch of yet another wave of Mega Star "never-before-released" laser and CD+G karaoke software hits, bringing this year's number of new offerings to eight record breaking volumes. The latest software titles include songs by such chart-topping artists as Bryan Adams, Aerosmith, Salt-N-Pepa, Tanya Tucker, and more. All Mega Star software is produced exclusively for Nikkodo in the U.S.A. by NuTech Entertainment of Encino, California.

"We are extremely pleased to be releasing yet another group of karaoke software hits," said Ed Pearson, General Manager Sales & Marketing for Nikkodo. According to Mr. Pearson, the company's song title agreements with NuTech, EMI Music Publishing and Warner-Chappell Music Pub-

lishing are all coming to fruition at one time, providing karaoke fans with a large variety of hit music software.

Mr. Pearson credits the fast production turnaround time to NuTech Entertainment's involvement. Spearheaded by President Lee Kasper, NuTech offers superior production values. Mr. Kasper, who was also the co-founder of Image Entertainment, has produced top quality karaoke and other music products for several years. Mr. Kasper recently branched out creating NuTech Entertainment which focuses only on the karaoke market. ☐



U.S.A.

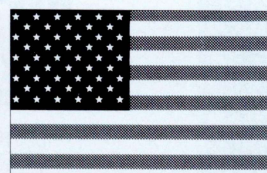
JVC Has Country Song Fest

JVC Songmate America Co., a subsidiary of the consumer electronics and karaoke manufacturer JVC, has announced their intention to hold a country music karaoke singalong event. The

event is called Fanfest, and will be held from May 4th to the 7th in California.

JVC Songmate is currently conducting a major country music karaoke talent round-up at country music clubs and shopping malls from Ventura to San Diego. Thirty finalists will be chosen to compete at Fanfest for a JVC home entertainment center valued at over \$5,000. JVC Songmate is the exclusive sponsor of the event. In the weeks preceding the show, the company has been conducting an advertising campaign on country music radio that includes the giveaway of a JVC CD+G karaoke player and country music software. ☐

For more info, contact JVC Songmate at +1-310-553-9400. ☐

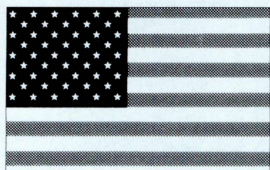


U.S.A.

P.A.K. Conference To Be Held

American Karaoke Magazine announces that they will be co-sponsoring the 1st Pacific-American Karaoke Business Conference in Palm Springs, California from September 25th to the 28th. For

further information, please see the notice on p. 103 of this magazine. □



U.S.A.

Sound Choice Releases CD+G

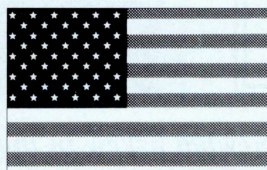
Sound Choice recently released several discs in its new CD+G format. The company has focused its marketing plan on the aggressive pricing – what they call their "cost per quality song" plan (\$29.95 suggested retail for 15 songs) – of their software to create a niche for themselves.

Sound Choice's first CD+G offering is a country music disc. The title includes such songs as "Chattahoochie" and "Boot Scootin' Boogie." Their second and third discs include such hits as John Michael Montgomery's "I Swear," Ray Price's "For the Good Times," George Strait's "I Cross My Heart," and the Charlie Daniels Band's "The Devil Went Down To Georgia."

Future releases will include pop classics from the past and present along with additional country titles. A free evaluation disc is still available and includes a postage paid survey to get customer comments and suggestions on Sound Choice products so future refinements can be made. The company is also seeking song suggestions for future releases.

For further information, call

Sound Choice toll-free in the U.S. at 1-800-788-4487. Elsewhere, call +1-704-889-9766 or fax +1-704-889-9768. □



U.S.A.

Nikkodo Announces New Software

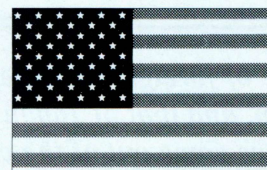
Nikkodo U.S.A., Inc. announces the release of 41,562 pounds of new CD+G and laser disc karaoke software. The propitious poundage of music was made available through exclusive software licensing and production agreements with EMI Music Publishing, Warner-Chappell Music Publishing and NuTech Entertainment, Inc.

"This is undoubtedly the largest amount of karaoke software from one manufacturer to ever hit the market at one time," said Ed Pearson, General Manager of Sales and Marketing. To date, Nikkodo has managed to release at least 150 CD+G and LD songs per month since the beginning of 1994.

"Our objective over the last six months has been to take over as the world's leading software manufacturer," said Mr. Pearson. "Thanks to exclusive production agreements with EMI, Warner-Chappell and NuTech our goal has been realized."

The new CD+G and LD selections include current hits from such artists as Celine Dion, Technotronic, Guns N' Roses, Jesus Jones, Tina Turner and Michael Bolton. Oldies

include artists such as the Stylistics, Jim Croce, America, The Monkees, Bread, B.J. Thomas, and Carole King. The software was scheduled to go on sale on March 1 in the U.S. □



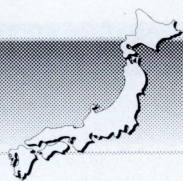
U.S.A.

Nikkodo Exports Back To Japan

Nikkodo USA reports that reverse exports to Japan from the U.S. subsidiary have reached a level of "at least \$1 million per year."

"It has been our intention all along to increase exports from the United States," said David Yaeger, Vice President Controller/ Operations for Nikkodo USA. "The current yen-dollar exchange rate just helped to expedite the process because now it is more cost effective for us to press our karaoke software offerings here."

By the end of 1994, the number will increase to \$5 million annually. The company is also expected to export an estimated \$2 million in software to mainland China and Hong Kong. "As far as we know, we're the only karaoke manufacturer to pull this kind of a switch," says Mr. Yaeger. "It became very apparent to us that to remain profitable in bringing this new karaoke software to market, we could not produce the video and music tracks in Japan because the song titles and lyrics were from U.S. artists." ■



*Is Japan really
a high-tech
wonderland?*

by Carl Freire



The image of foreign countries is always somewhat askew in the minds of those who have never been to them, and that of Japan has been no exception. Given the wealth of high-technology products that have come out of the country, it is no surprise that many believe the country to be a technological wonderland. The truth, of course, lies somewhere on a scale that starts with handmade pottery and ends with fuzzy logic. This month, we take a look at the extent to which technological advances have — or have not — transformed life in today's Japan.

Technological "advances" turn up in the strangest places, and in Japan no better place to view some of them can be found than that humblest of locations, the toilet. Japan's manufacturers of bathroom fixtures have, in some instances, taken the art of loo creation to an extreme that not even the fabled Mr. John could have imagined. One need look no further than the announcement of a new commode last fall that, amongst other things, was heated, had a bidet function, and could even take your blood pressure.

A homely example, it's true, but one that is indicative of the direction to which new technologies have been applied in this country. An anthropologist some years back proposed a theory of Japanese society that he described as the "anatomy of dependence." Essentially, interpersonal relations are governed by the assumption that one person will take care of the other in some way. The host will supply the guest with food and drink without being asked. Taxi doors can be opened by the driver so the customer doesn't have to expend the energy on the task. That such a framework governs relations may explain why the nation's consumer electronics manufacturers have made such an effort to include functions that would likely be regarded as useless frills elsewhere.

Certainly, when it comes to services and products, advanced technologies have been used to the hilt. Doors that slide open a la "Star Trek" have been in use in Japan for quite some time. As implied above, the world of consumer electronics is typified by "extras." Manufacturers compete to release a vast number of products that differ by little more than a slight variation in the design of the handle or new color schemes. Likewise, one boom box might offer "DoDeCaHorn

audio," while the other spares the customer the fancy name and simply calls it "ambient sound."

Not all of the minor adjustments are necessarily frivolous. Unless one wants to pay only rock bottom prices on everything, most electronic goods — ranging from televisions to air-conditioners — come equipped with timers to shut them on and/or off. Space heaters are, for the most part, gas or kerosene powered, which could lead to the build-up of dangerous fumes in a closed room. Aside from the warnings written in the manual that comes with the product, many are equipped with built-in meters that simply determine the amount of oxygen in the air. If it falls below a certain level, they automatically shut down. And, though the industry may have trouble peddling them in the U.S., microwave ranges with built-in convection ovens are quite popular in this country where actual ovens are extremely rare.

Another notable area is the realm of personal digital assistants. Actually, the more appropriate word in this context would be the electronic datebook. Although their use does not seem to be extraordinarily widespread, the fact is there is a broad range of datebook products on the market. The more elaborate ones will store phone numbers, maintain files of currency conversion rates, provide a miniature dictionary, display calendars, and perform a host of other basic tasks. A variation on the theme comes in the form of electronic dictionaries, with some serving as multi-language translators and others that are compact Japanese character lexicons.

Granted, in this day and age, much of this is not out of the ordinary outside of Japan. On the other hand, Japan lags surprisingly behind most of the developed Western countries in the field of computers and com-

現代の日本

puter-related advances. At face value, this statement sounds contradictory. After all, Japan is one of the largest producers of personal computers in the world, and Fujitsu is a significant player in the mainframe and supercomputer markets.

However, there are several factors that constrain the personal computer business in Japan. For starters, there's the Japanese language. The complexities of the written language are difficult enough for the brain and pen or pencil to handle; with the 100 keys, plus or minus a few, on the de facto standard QWERTY keyboard, the problems are multiplied. The simplest approach to producing characters involves typing out the sounds in romanization, and then selecting the appropriate one from a list of all that correspond with that particular sound. For someone trained in touch typing, it's not as difficult as it might seem, but then again, touch typing is not a skill taught in Japanese schools.

For these and other reasons, computers have been eschewed in favor of one-trick ponies: dedicated word processors. The distribution of word processors, however, is uneven. One office might have one for every employee, while another has one for every twenty, or thirty, or possibly just one period. Moreover, until recently, if the manufacturer of person A's word processor was different from that of person B, odds are they couldn't share files with one another.

This latter problem is even more pronounced in the personal computer industry. There are at least a half dozen major producers of computer equipment in Japan, including such giants as NEC, Toshiba, and Fujitsu. And for each manufacturer, there is a different operating system, a different set of programming standards. For better or worse, most of the computers in the English-speaking world employ either MS-DOS, OS/2, or the Macintosh standard. This has made it very easy for software makers to develop products that could be used by anyone using that particular operating system, regardless of whether they owned an IBM or Compaq or Dell computer. In Japan, on the other hand, a wide range of conflicting standards has both limited the breadth of available software and reduced the odds that someone might change brands, even if a competing company's product was superior.

As a result, the widespread use of computers seen overseas has not caught up with Japan. Needless to say, other factors such as pricing and the space limitations of urban housing also play a role. The appear-

ance of a version of DOS two years ago called DOS/V that can read programs written in English and Japanese has led to a gradual drop in prices, essentially because it allowed such U.S. discount PC manufacturers as Compaq and Dell to bring the computers and competitive pricing strategies to Japanese shores. However, the number of PCs in the homes is nowhere near that of the U.S., for example, and it is highly unlikely that it will catch up in the near future.

Likewise, if there are few PCs, there is little electronic mail. The "cyber society" that has become all the rage overseas is but a dream here. An article in the new media technologies magazine *Wired* outlined the low level of Japan's connectiveness to Internet, the basis for the growing global network. There are a number of domestic networks, but only one — NiftyServe, through its connection to H&R Block's CompuServe network — has substantial linkages to the outside world. The others offer electronic mail access and little else.

As should be apparent by now, the picture of Japan as a high-tech wonderland is obviously a good deal more complex than any catchphrase can capture. Furthermore, though a technology may be advanced, one must still consider whether people are actually using it. Just because a new widgetometer slices, dices, walks the dog, and can call Paris for you doesn't mean you're going to use it for more than just measuring widgets. What an engineer considers to be the most useful device in the world might in fact be a device that has a market of one.

And, of course, people are not going to stop doing things the old way and switch to the new simply because it's new. One shouldn't confuse the use of conveniences with a wholesale change in societal attitudes. Not everyone in the U.S. or Western Europe, for example, has a computer, and not everyone wants or even needs one. Likewise, not everyone in Japan necessarily wants or needs the commode from "2001." People use things as they see fit. A common cliché about Japan is the "startling contrast between the old and the new," usually accompanied by a photo of a woman in a kimono chatting on the telephone or a monk in his robes cruising down the street on a moped. The supposed contradiction between "tradition" and "modernity" doesn't exist in that person's mind; it's simply a fact of life. People hoping to find "Blade Runner" on the streets of Japan are simply going to have to wait a little longer. ■



From Our Readers

On March 31st, the JAM Editorial office received the following FAX from Mr. Ramon Gili of DiNunno Revsa, a Barcelona-based company. The letter is reprinted unedited and in its entirety, with an explanation following.

Dinunno
revsa, s.a.
Passaige Montsia, 15 Pol Ind. Can Carne
Telf. (93) 714 25 22
Fax (93) 714 23 97
08211 CASTELLAR DEL VALLES
(Barcelona) Spain
April, 1994

To our customers and collaborators,

A self-denominated company "AAG" (Anti-counterfeiting Advisory Group) is directing to important magazines and traders of the video game sector announcing the search warrant of the Spanish police in our premises.

Although that is true, we are in this moments documenting the Spanish justice that not even we have never manufactured illegal copies from and company and less from companies Capcom, SNK, and Data East. But these documents that are now in possession of the judge confirms what we have mentioned before.

For all this, and once the sentence will be reported and suspecting that there are some strange commercial interest under all this matter, we are studying the possibility to course legal actions against this company called "AAG" and its representative Mr. Vince Gambino and also against companies from the capital of Spain, with view to clarify the responsibilities in this matter.

Yours Sincerely

Ramon Gili

The Anti-Counterfeiting Group (AAG) is an international investigative body supervised by American Amusement Machine Association Executive VP Robert Fay and funded by the Japan Amusement Machine Manufacturers' Association (JAMMA). With offices in the U.S., Europe, and Asia, the association's purpose is to track down those companies who are producing copied games (usually PC boards).

Recently, the AAG, acting on information gathered from several Japanese manufacturers, petitioned the Spanish authorities to issue search warrants for DiNunno/REVSA, whose Managing Director is Ramon Gili. Mr. Gili's name was not on the search warrant that was issued by the Spanish police, who conducted a raid on this company at the end of February. At the time this issue went to press, there was no conformation from either the AAG or the Spanish authorities as to whether illegal copies had been discovered among the items seized.

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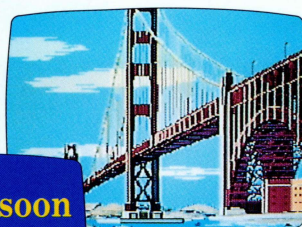
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Chinese & Taiwanese	1,564	Thai	432
Hong Kong (Cantonese)	80	Malaysian	96
Indonesian	768	Vietnamese	112
Indonesian (Mandarin)	144	Korean	1,024



KX-GM800 CD + Graphics Changer Karaoke System
XL-GM800TN Karaoke CD Changer
AX-K800TN Integrated Amplifier
SP-K800BK Karaoke Speaker System

- Microphones and TV shown are optionally available.
- The above monitor picture is simulated.

JVC

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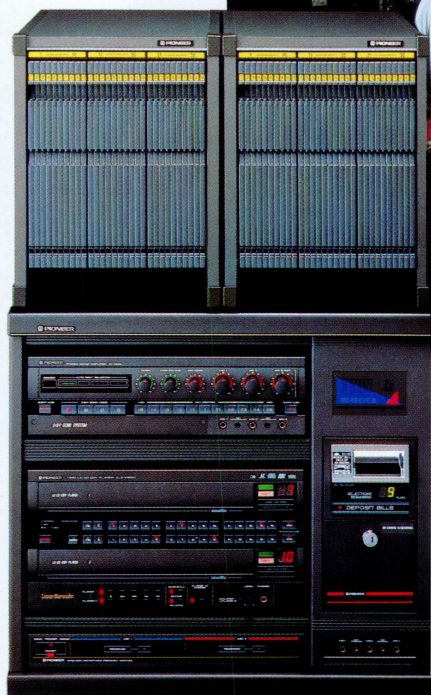


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Monitor image is simulated.

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LC-V100 (Europe and Asia)
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* Multi-Stage Noise Shaping technology was invented by NTT (LSI Labs.)
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- Compatible with 5 Types of Optical Disc
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- Aspherical Glass-Lens Pickup
- 1-Spindle Brushless Direct Drive Motor
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Optional Accessories



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 - Color: Gold/Gray



5 in 1

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- Digital Servo
- Advanced Digital TBC
- Multi-Stage Noise Shaping 1 Bit DAC*
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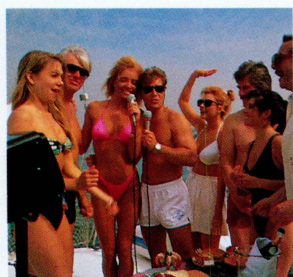
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DEP-1500K



- Digital Echo
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 - Multiplex Switch
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 - Terminal for Tape Deck (REC/PLAY)
- Audio Inputs : 2 Systems
 Microphone Inputs : 2

Top grade digital amplifier with tape deck,
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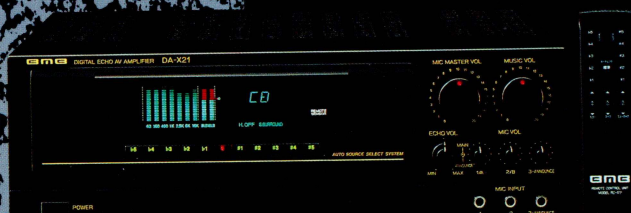
Digital AV Amplifier DA-X11 (Sale on spring!)



- Dolby (B) Noise Reduction
- Howling OFF Function
- Spectrum Analyzer
- Max. Output Power: 100w + 100w/8Ω (EIAJ)
- Digital key controller (±2.5, 11 steps)
- Digital Echo W/Delay & Repeat Control
- Simulated Surround

Top grade digital amplifier,
 Howling OFF function.

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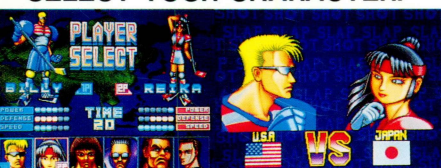
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